



SONORAN CORRIDOR TIER I ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Agency Outreach and Involvement Plan
August 2017

PREPARED FOR:

ADOT



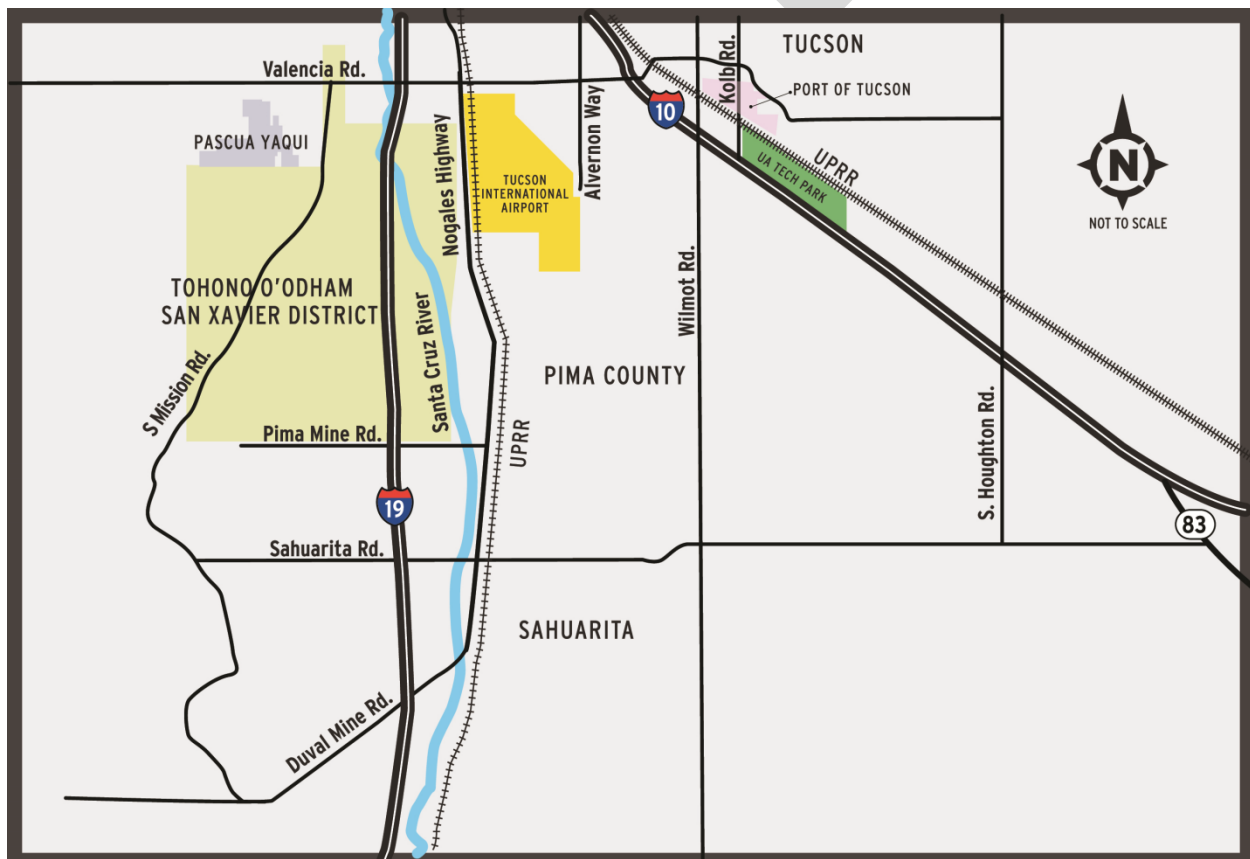
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration

SONORAN CORRIDOR PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), is initiating the preparation of a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Sonoran Corridor in Southern Arizona. The proposed project would result in the implementation of a new transportation facility between Interstate 10 and Interstate 19 south of the Tucson International Airport. The purpose of the project, as currently defined, is to provide an additional route option for Southern Arizona residents, provide an opportunity for improved freight movement between Mexico and points east of Tucson, provide congestion relief near downtown Tucson, and accommodate anticipated growth in the area.

This Agency Outreach and Involvement Plan (Plan) identifies the Cooperating and Participating Agencies invited to take part in the project by virtue of jurisdiction or technical expertise. It also outlines the manner of communication to be used during the project, the phases of the work, and the responsibilities and responsiveness requested of Participating Agencies during each phase to help maintain the schedule and progress in completing the Tier 1 EIS.

Figure 1 – Vicinity Map



AGENCY COORDINATION PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

Under Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), agencies are responsible for identifying any issues of concern regarding potential environmental, social, or economic impacts that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval needed for the project. Section 6002 is intended to assure that agencies are fully engaged in the scoping of the project and decisions regarding alternatives to be evaluated in detail in the National Environmental Policy Act analysis, as well as the development of a Corridor Selection Report (CSR) to be included in the final Tier 1 EIS and Record of Decision (ROD). An agency's role related to their areas of expertise may include the following:

- Provide meaningful and early input to the methodologies and level of detail required in the corridor selection and environmental studies
- Identify issues that could substantially delay or prevent granting of permits/approvals
- Identify opportunities for collaboration, including attending coordination meetings and joint field reviews, as appropriate
- Provide timely review and comment on preliminary environmental documents to reflect the views and concerns of their respective agencies on the adequacy of the documents, alternatives considered, and anticipated impacts and mitigation

SAFETEA-LU requires lead agencies to establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation and comment during the environmental review process. The purposes of the coordination plan are to facilitate and document the lead agencies' structured interaction with the public and other agencies and inform the public and other agencies of how the coordination will be accomplished.

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), signed into law in July 2012, amended SAFETEA-LU by providing additional guidance on agency participation in the NEPA process. MAP-21 required Cooperating and Participating Agencies to carry out their obligations under applicable laws concurrently with the lead agency's environmental review process, unless doing so would impair their ability to conduct needed analysis or otherwise carry out those obligations.

Enacted in 2015, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act builds on the requirements in SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 to accelerate the environmental review process for surface transportation projects. It strives to institutionalize best practices and expedite complex infrastructure projects without undermining critical environmental laws or opportunities for public engagement. Further, the FAST Act clarifies that an agency participating in the environmental review process shall:

- Provide comments, responses, studies, or methodologies on those areas within the special expertise or jurisdiction of the agency
- Use the process to address any environmental issues of concern to the agency

To the maximum extent practicable and consistent with applicable law, each agency receiving an opportunity for involvement shall limit the comments of the agency to subject matter areas within the special expertise or jurisdiction of the agency. The Federal Lead Agency will consider and respond to comments received from agencies on matters within the special expertise or jurisdiction of those agencies.

This Plan has been prepared under guidance from the FHWA and the ADOT in compliance with Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21, and the FAST Act. The Plan is meant to foster participation and cooperation among federal, state, regional, county, and local agencies, as well as tribal governments, during the environmental review process. It describes the roles and responsibilities of each agency involved in the study.

Lead Agency

The FHWA is the designated Federal Lead Agency for the environmental review process. As such, the FHWA is responsible for implementing NEPA, including compliance with regulatory requirements, legal sufficiency of the Tier 1 EIS, and ensuring opportunities for public and agency involvement. ADOT is the Local Project Sponsor that is preparing the CSR and Tier 1 EIS in coordination with the FHWA.

The FHWA and ADOT identified a list of federal, state, regional, county, and local agencies, as well as tribal governments, to invite to become either a Cooperating Agency or Participating Agency for this environmental review process.

Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies are, in Title 40 CFR 1508.5 and 23 CFR 771.111(d), federal agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in the study. Other agencies or tribal governments of similar qualifications may also qualify, if FHWA concurs. Cooperating Agencies have a slightly greater degree of responsibility and involvement in the environmental review process than Participating Agencies.

Cooperating Agencies will be requested to provide the following during the development of the Tier 1 EIS on areas within the special expertise or jurisdiction of the agency:

- Meaningful and early input on the purpose and need, range of alternatives, methodologies, and level of detail required to evaluate impacts to the agency's jurisdictional resource(s)
- Attendance at monthly coordination meetings, including access via teleconference, as well as possible field visits as needed
- Timely reviews and written comments on the NEPA documents that explain the views and concerns of the agency on the adequacy of the document, anticipated impacts, and mitigation strategies
- Identification of the impacts and important issues to be addressed in the Tier 1 EIS pertaining to the intersection of the alternatives with the agency's jurisdictional resource(s)
- Making available the necessary professional staff to assist in the Tier 1 EIS process and development of all technical documents

Table 1 (Cooperating Agencies) lists the 11 federal agencies that were invited to be a Cooperating Agency. All agencies that did not provide a response will be treated as a Participating Agency.

Monthly in-person and/or webinar meetings will be held with Cooperating Agencies, along with agency meetings at the two remaining key milestones in the environmental review process, as shown in Figure 2 (Work Process and Schedule). This will include key milestone meetings for the agencies prior to the public information meetings on the CSR and before the public hearings on the Draft Tier 1 EIS.

Table 1 – Cooperating Agencies

Agency	Response to Invitation
FEDERAL	
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)	Accepted as Participating Agency
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Accepted as Participating Agency
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Accepted
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Accepted as Participating Agency
National Park Service (NPS)	Accepted as Participating Agency
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Accepted
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)	Accepted
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)	Accepted
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Accepted as Participating Agency
U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Coronado National Forest	Accepted as Participating Agency
Western Area Power Administration	Accepted as Participating Agency

Participating Agencies

Participating Agencies, as defined in SAFETEA-LU, can be federal, state, regional, county, and local agencies, as well as tribal governments that may have an interest in the Sonoran Corridor. The responsibilities of these agencies related to areas within their special expertise or jurisdiction include, but are not limited to:

- Meaningful and early input on the purpose and need, range of alternatives, methodologies, and level of detail required to evaluate impacts to respective jurisdictional resource(s)
- Identifying issues of concern regarding potential environmental or socioeconomic impacts
- Attending key milestone meetings, as well as possible field visits as needed
- Providing meaningful and timely input on unresolved issues
- Commenting on the Draft Tier 1 EIS during the circulation and availability period

Table 2 (Participating Agencies) lists the 36 agencies that were invited to be a Participating Agency, along with their response to the invitation.

Accepting the designation as a Participating Agency does not indicate support for the Sonoran Corridor nor does it provide the agency with increased oversight or approval authority beyond its statutory limits. Meetings will be held with Participating Agencies to discuss specific subjects of interest, concerns, and recommendations at the key milestones in the environmental review process, as discussed in Figure 2 (Work Process and Schedule). This will include key milestone meetings for the agencies prior to the public information meetings on the CSR and before the public hearings on the Draft Tier 1 EIS. It is anticipated that these key milestone meetings will be held at locations within the study vicinity. Participating agencies may request separate meetings with the study team to discuss any issues that may occur throughout the study.

Table 2 – Participating Agencies

Agency	Response to Invitation
FEDERAL	
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	Accepted (non-response)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Declined
U.S. Air Force (USAF), Davis-Monthan Air Force Base	Accepted (non-response)
U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)	Accepted (non-response)
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)	Accepted (non-response)
STATE	
Arizona Air National Guard (AANG)	Accepted (non-response)
Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC)	Accepted (non-response)
Arizona Department of Corrections (ADOC)	Accepted
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)	Accepted (non-response)
Arizona Department of Public Safety (ADPS)	Accepted (non-response)
Arizona Department of Water Resources	Accepted (non-response)
Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD)	Accepted as Cooperating Agency
Arizona State Land Department (ASLD)	Accepted
Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Accepted
Arizona State Parks	Accepted
REGIONAL	Accepted (non-response)
Pima Association of Governments (PAG)	Accepted (non-response)
Tucson Airport Authority (TAA)	Accepted
COUNTY	
Pima County	Accepted
Pima County Flood Control District	Accepted

Agency	Response to Invitation
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY	
City of South Tucson	Accepted
City of Tucson	Accepted
Green Valley Council	Accepted
Town of Sahuarita	Accepted (non-response)
UTILITY	
Central Arizona Irrigation and Drainage District	Accepted (non-response)
Central Arizona Project (CAP)	Not needed. Covered under Bureau of Reclamation.
Trico Electric Cooperative	
UNS Energy Corporation/Tucson Electric Power (TEP)	Accepted (non-response)
TRIBAL	
Ak-Chin Indian Community	Accepted (non-response)
Gila River Indian Community	Accepted (non-response)
Pascua Yaqui Tribe	Accepted (non-response)
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community	Accepted (non-response)
San Carlos Apache Tribe	Accepted (non-response)
Tohono O'odham Nation	Accepted (non-response)
Tonto Apache Tribe	Accepted (non-response)
White Mountain Apache Tribe	Accepted (non-response)
Yavapai-Apache Nation	Accepted (non-response)

MAJOR DELIVERABLES, COORDINATION POINTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The FHWA and ADOT will be seeking input from the Cooperating and Participating Agencies throughout the CSR and Tier 1 EIS process. Specifically, the FHWA and ADOT will be requesting the Cooperating and Participating Agencies review and comment on the following major deliverables.

Pursuant to the FAST Act, Table 3 (Major Deliverables and Review Schedule) includes a schedule of major deliverables and review periods for Cooperating and Participating Agencies. As established, each agency is required to conform to the completion period set forth in the project review timetable. Lack of a response will be considered concurrence.

The key coordination points between the FHWA, ADOT, Cooperating Agencies, and Participating Agencies, including which agency is responsible for activities during that coordination point, are listed in Table 4 (Agency Coordination Points and Responsibilities). Figure 2 (Work Process and Schedule) includes the overall work flow process to understand where major coordination points fall within the 3-year schedule.

Table 3 - Major Deliverables and Review Schedule

MAJOR DELIVERABLE	Schedule for Agency Receipt		Review Period
	Cooperating	Participating	
Agency Outreach and Involvement Plan	X	X	30 days
Scoping Summary Report	X	X	30 days
Purpose and Need	X	X	30 days
Corridor Selection Evaluation Methodology	X	X	30 days
CSR Initial Screening (Universe and first screen)	X	X	30 days
CSR Final Screening	X	X	30 days
Corridor Selection Report	X	X	30 days
Tier 1 EIS Annotated Outline and Methodology	X	X	30 days
Administrative Draft Tier 1 EIS	X	Not Applicable	30 days
Draft Tier 1 EIS	X	X	45 days
Administrative Draft Final Tier 1 EIS	X	Not Applicable	30 days
Combined Final Tier 1 EIS and ROD	X	X	Not Applicable

The Cooperating and Participating Agencies should submit written comments on the major deliverables to FHWA and ADOT within the review periods listed in Table 3. Under the FAST Act, Cooperating and Participating Agencies shall limit comments on these major deliverables to subject matter areas within the special expertise or jurisdiction of the agency. The FHWA and ADOT will consider and respond to comments received from agencies on matters within the

special expertise or jurisdiction of those agencies. The FHWA and ADOT will respond within 30 days after the comment period ends, documenting how the comments will be addressed.

Pre-Scoping Phase

Before the formal Tier 1 EIS process begins, one-on-one Pre-Scoping Agency Briefings with federal, state, regional, and local agencies/jurisdictions will be held. The goal of these pre-scoping meetings is to cultivate, build and strengthen relationships between agencies, as well as educate and increase understanding in an informal and open environment. Meetings to be held at agency offices.

Public Involvement Process

A Public Involvement Plan has been developed by the study team that outlines how community members will be engaged through a series of public meetings scheduled at specific milestones in the process. Meetings will be held in both Tucson and Sahuarita to align with the public scoping phase, the selection of the initial “universe” of corridor alternatives, the screening of alternatives and the development of a range of reasonable alternatives as shown in Figure 2 (Work Process and Schedule). There are a variety of ways to comment including at the meetings, by email, toll-free bilingual information line or through the study website administered by the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Figure 2 – Work Process and Schedule

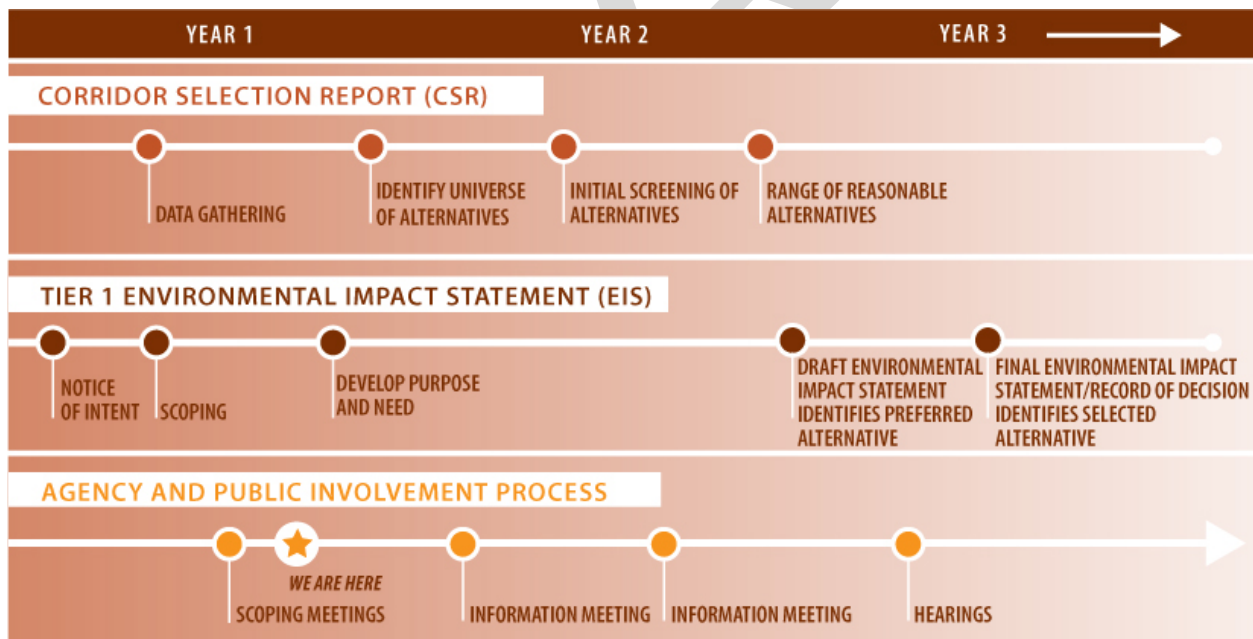


Table 4 - Agency Coordination Points and Responsibilities

Coordination Point	Originating Agency	Receiving Agency	Task	Timeframe
Pre-Scoping Meetings	FHWA with ADOT	Agencies and Key Stakeholders	FHWA and ADOT hold pre-scoping meetings to elicit information, issues, and concerns prior to formal scoping period and meetings.	March/April 2017
NOI to Prepare Tier 1 EIS	FHWA	Federal Register	FHWA developed and published NOI in Federal Register.	May 2017
Invitation of Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA invited agencies; agencies accepted or declined in writing within 45 days.	May 2017
Scoping Meetings	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies and Public	FHWA and ADOT hold Scoping meetings to hear comments on purpose and need; range of alternatives; potential impacts; and evaluation methods.	June 2017
Follow-up of Outstanding Invitations for Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT to follow-up with agency invitees who did not accept or decline invitations to ensure participation status.	July/August 2017
Scoping Summary Report	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT prepare Scoping Summary Report and circulate report to Cooperating and Participating Agencies.	September 2017
Purpose and Need	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT prepare Purpose and Need; obtain input from Cooperating and Participating Agencies.	November 2017

Coordination Point	Originating Agency	Receiving Agency	Task	Timeframe
Corridor Selection Methodology Report	ADOT with FHWA	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT hold key milestone meeting with agencies to seek feedback on Corridor Selection Report methodology, process, universe and initial screening of alternatives prior to public information meetings.	January 2018
Public Information Meetings on Universe of Corridors and initial screening	FHWA with ADOT	Public	FHWA and ADOT hold public information meetings to obtain input on Corridor Selection Report universe and initial screening of alternatives (fatal flaw review).	February 2018
Tier 1 EIS Annotated Outline and Methodology	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT share environmental checklist and methodologies to be used in analysis of Tier 1 EIS alternatives with Cooperating Agencies.	March 2018
Key Milestone Meeting on Range of Reasonable Alternatives	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT hold key milestone meeting with agencies to seek feedback on the CSR reasonable range of alternatives.	June 2018
Public Information Meetings on Reasonable Range of Alternatives	FHWA with ADOT	Public	FHWA and ADOT hold public information meetings to obtain input on Corridor Selection Report reasonable range of alternatives and input to Tier 1 EIS.	July 2018
Administrative Draft Tier 1 EIS	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT develop Draft Tier 1 EIS document; Cooperating Agencies review Administrative Draft.	February 2019
Notice of Availability (NOA) and Draft Tier 1 EIS Circulation	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating and Participating Agencies and Public	FHWA publishes NOA; FHWA and ADOT circulate Draft Tier 1 EIS and hold public hearings during comment period; Agencies review subject areas during public circulation period.	March 2019

Coordination Point	Originating Agency	Receiving Agency	Task	Timeframe
Administrative Draft Final Tier 1 EIS	FHWA with ADOT	Cooperating Agencies	FHWA and ADOT complete Final Tier 1 EIS and Cooperating Agencies review Administrative Draft Final Tier 1 EIS; FHWA and ADOT sign the Final Tier 1 EIS.	August 2019
NOA and Combined Final Tier 1 EIS and ROD Distribution	FHWA	Cooperating and Participating Agencies and Public	FHWA publishes NOA and distributes combined Final Tier 1 EIS and ROD.	December 2019

CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR COOPERATING AGENCIES

SAFETEA-LU provided a formal process for resolving serious issues that might delay the proposed project or result in denial of a required approval for the proposed project. Section 1306 of MAP-21 replaced the SAFETEA-LU language on "Issue Resolution." The FHWA Arizona Division Administrator, ADOT, or the Governor of Arizona may invoke the Section 1306 process for issue resolution at any time. However, the conflict resolution process discussed below should be considered the first option for issue resolution prior to invocation of Section 1306.

Should an issue come to an impasse between the FHWA, ADOT, and a Cooperating Agency, the general process for addressing and resolving the issue would be:

- Involved parties will identify and agree on the issue to be resolved at the project manager level
- The manager at the area, district, or section level will initiate the conflict resolution process
- FHWA or ADOT will notify the Cooperating Agency manager at the regional or deputy level
- FHWA, ADOT, or the Cooperating Agency will compile and submit all pertinent information to involved parties
- Involved parties will determine whether all information necessary for issue resolution has been received
- FHWA or ADOT will hold a formal meeting (involving the first three tiers of management) to resolve the issue, followed by a 30-day review/decision period
- A decision will be made, recorded, and passed on to the appropriate team members
- The process is completed

Under the FAST Act, any issue resolved by the Federal Lead Agency with the concurrence of the Cooperating Agency may not be reconsidered unless significant new information or circumstances arise. If issue resolution does not occur, a discussion of the issue and why

resolution could not be reached will be submitted to the heads (e.g., administrator, director, or commander) of the Cooperating Agencies for further review and final resolution.

SECTION 106 CONSULTING PARTIES

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions or undertakings on historic properties, as well as seek comments from Consulting Parties based on their special knowledge of, concern for, or mandated regulatory role relative to historic properties (36 CFR Part 800). The purpose of Section 106 is to avoid unnecessary harm to historic properties from federal undertakings. Lead federal agencies are responsible for initiating Section 106 review, most of which takes place among agency, tribal, state, and organization officials. The following parties are entitled to participate as Consulting Parties during the Section 106 process:

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)
- State Historic Preservation Officers
- Federally recognized tribes/Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO)
- Local governments
- Applicants for federal assistance, permits, licenses, and other approvals

Other individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in a project may request to participate in the Section 106 process as Consulting Parties “due to the nature of their legal or economic relation to the undertaking or affected properties, or their concern with the undertaking’s effects on historic properties.” Their participation is subject to approval by FHWA, as the lead federal agency.

The FHWA and ADOT will conduct the Section 106 process concurrently with the NEPA environmental review process.

The FHWA and ADOT also intend to develop a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) to identify a standard process for the future identification, evaluation, mitigation, monitoring, and recovery of historic properties within the Sonoran Corridor. The FHWA and ADOT will execute the PA at the end of the Tier 1 EIS process to set the stage for subsequent Tier 2 environmental reviews and official Section 106 consultation. The Section 106 process would be conducted in conjunction with the Tier 2 NEPA environmental review process and ensure consistency with the Tier 1 PA developed for the Sonoran Corridor. Table 5 lists 31 agencies and organizations to be invited to participate as a Section 106 Consulting Party.

Table 5 - Section 106 Consulting Parties

FEDERAL
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
Federal Aviation Administration

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service, Coronado National Forest
Western Area Power Administration
STATE
Arizona Department of Corrections
Arizona State Historic Preservation Office
Arizona State Land Department
Arizona State Museum
COUNTIES
Pima County Regional Flood Control District
Pima County

LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
City of South Tucson
City of Tucson
Town of Sahuarita
TRIBAL
Ak-Chin Indian Community
Gila River Indian Community
Hopi Tribe
Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
San Carlos Apache Tribe
Tohono O'odham Nation
Tonto Apache Tribe
White Mountain Apache Tribe
Yavapai-Apache Nation
UTILITY
UNS Energy Corporation/Tucson Electric Power (TEP)
Trico Electric Cooperative
RAILROADS
Union Pacific Railroad

APPENDIX A – LETTERS TO COOPERATING AND PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

DRAFT



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

ARIZONA DIVISION

4000 North Central Avenue
Suite 1500
Phoenix, Arizona 85012-3500
Phone: (602) 379-3646
Fax: (602) 382-8998
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/azdiv/index.htm>

May 26, 2017

In Reply Refer To:

410-A(BFI)
TRACS No. P10005P
Sonoran Corridor Tier I EIS
Cooperating Agency Invitation

[Agency Representative], [Title]
[Agency Name]
[Address Line 1]
[Address Line 2]
[City], [ST] [ZIP]

Re: Invitation to become a Cooperating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the Sonoran Corridor Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement

Dear [Agency Representative]:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) have initiated a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study for the Sonoran Corridor between Interstate 19 (I-19) and Interstate 10 (I-10), located south of the Tucson International Airport, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study area is shown in Figures 1 and 2. A copy of the Notice of Intent to prepare the Tier 1 EIS published in the Federal Register is enclosed, which officially began the scoping period on May 12, 2017. The FHWA is the Federal Lead Agency and ADOT is the Local project sponsor for the Tier 1 EIS under NEPA.

In December 2015, the United States (US) Congress approved the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, which is a 5-year legislation to improve the Nation's surface transportation infrastructure. The FAST Act formally designates the Sonoran Corridor as a high priority corridor on the National Highway System.

The FHWA and ADOT will evaluate all potential corridor options as thoroughly and efficiently as possible to prepare the project for implementation. A Corridor Selection Report (CSR) will be prepared in conjunction with the Tier 1 EIS. The CSR will evaluate a large number of 2000-foot wide corridor alternatives using a multi-level progressive screening process that relies upon topographical, environmental, and other planning information to reduce the number of corridor alternatives to a Reasonable Range of Corridor Build Alternatives. The Reasonable Range of Corridor Build Alternatives will be carried forward into the Tier 1 EIS. Based on their effects on the social, economic, natural environment, the Tier 1 EIS on a broad scale will assess the No Build Alternative (i.e., do-nothing option) and all Corridor Build Alternatives identified through the CSR in more detail leading to a Selected Corridor Alternative. Phased Implementation Plans will be developed for the Corridor Build Alternatives, which will be comprised of smaller

proposed projects that could be implemented in the future following completion of the Tier 1 EIS. The primary goal of the Tier 1 EIS is to identify a Selected Corridor alternative for the Sonoran Corridor.

In accordance with Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1501.6 and 23 CFR 771.111(d), your agency has been identified as one that may have an interest in this project, because of the potential for intergovernmental issues and/or impacts within your agency's legal jurisdiction. With this letter, we extend your agency an invitation to become a Cooperating Agency in the development of the Tier 1 EIS. This designation does not imply that your agency supports the proposal. However, your agency has been identified as having jurisdiction by law or having specialized expertise with respect to one or more environmental issues associated with this proposed project.

As a Cooperating Agency, you will be afforded the opportunity to identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental or socio-economic impacts that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the project. We suggest that your agency's role in the development of the above project include the following as they relate to your area of expertise:

- Provide meaningful and early input on the purpose and need, range of alternatives, methodologies and level of detail required by your agency to evaluate impacts to your resources;
- Identify impacts and important issues to be addressed in the EIS pertaining to the intersection of the build alternatives with the resource(s) in your jurisdiction;
- Participate in coordination meetings, and/or field visits, as appropriate; and
- Provide timely review and comment on the draft Tier 1 EIS to reflect the views and concerns of the agency on the adequacy of the document, alternatives considered, and anticipated impacts and mitigation.

Your agency does not have to accept this invitation. If your agency does not wish to be a Cooperating Agency, you can request to be a Participating agency. If you would like to become a Cooperating Agency or Participating Agency, the FHWA respectfully requests that you respond to this invitation in writing no later than **Monday, July 31, 2017**. Your agency will be assumed a Participating Agency if a response is not received by the date previously mentioned. Your written response may be transmitted electronically to Tremaine Wilson, FHWA Environmental Coordinator, at tremaine.wilson@dot.gov; or to Carlos Lopez, ADOT Project Manager, at clopez@azdot.gov. Please include the title of the official responding.

The FHWA and ADOT greatly appreciate your input, and we invite you to participate in the following Agency Scoping Meeting for the Tier 1 EIS:

Wednesday, June 7, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Pima Association of Governments, Large Conference Room
1 East Broadway Boulevard, Suite 401, Tucson, Arizona

If you are unable to attend the Agency Scoping Meeting in person, we will also set up a webinar so you can join the meetings on-line. The information is as follows:

<https://meet.wsp.com/steve.hogan/qd31bygg>

Trouble Joining? Try <https://meet.wsp.com/steve.hogan/qd31bygg?sl=1>

Join by phone: 303 729-1593 (United States, Caller-Paid (West Coast) English)

Find a local number

<https://dialin.americas.pbworld.com/> Conference ID: 2182584

In addition, we invite you to attend the Public Scoping Meetings that will be held for the Sonoran Corridor Tier 1 EIS. The information on these meetings is as follows:

Wednesday, June 7, 2017 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Radisson Hotel Tucson Airport
4550 South Palo Verde Road, Tucson, Arizona

Thursday, June 8, 2017 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Santa Cruz Valley United Methodist Church
71 East Sahuarita Road, Sahuarita, Arizona

Additional information will be forthcoming during the scoping process via the project web site at <http://www.azdot.gov/Sonorancorridor>. If you have questions regarding this invitation or would like additional information, please contact Tremaine Wilson, FHWA Environmental Coordinator, at 602-382-8970 or tremaine.wilson@dot.gov; or Carlos Lopez, ADOT Project Manager, at 602-712-4786 or clopez@azdot.gov. Thank you for your cooperation and interest in the Sonoran Corridor Tier 1 EIS.

Sincerely,

Karla S. Petty
Division Administrator

Enclosures

cc: [Additional agency members]
ecc: Sarah Karasz, ADOT Environmental Planner, T100
Tremaine Wilson, FHWA Environmental Coordinator
Carlos Lopez, ADOT Project Manager



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

ARIZONA DIVISION

4000 North Central Avenue
Suite 1500
Phoenix, Arizona 85012-3500
Phone: (602) 379-3646
Fax: (602) 382-8998
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/azdiv/index.htm>

May 26, 2017

In Reply Refer To:

410-A(BFI)
TRACS No. P10005P
Sonoran Corridor Tier I EIS
Participating Agency Invitation

[Agency Representative], [Title]
[Agency Name]
[Address Line 1]
[Address Line 2]
[City], [ST] [ZIP]

Re: Invitation to become a Participating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the Sonoran Corridor Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement

Dear [Agency Representative]:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) have initiated a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study for the Sonoran Corridor between Interstate 19 (I-19) and Interstate 10 (I-10), located south of the Tucson International Airport, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study area is shown in Figures 1 and 2. A copy of the Notice of Intent to prepare the Tier 1 EIS published in the Federal Register is enclosed, which officially began the scoping period on May 12, 2017. The FHWA is the Federal Lead Agency and ADOT is the Local Project Sponsor for the Tier 1 EIS under NEPA.

In December 2015, the United States (US) Congress approved the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, which is a 5-year legislation to improve the Nation's surface transportation infrastructure. The FAST Act formally designates the Sonoran Corridor as a high priority corridor on the National Highway System.

The FHWA and ADOT will evaluate all potential corridor options as thoroughly and efficiently as possible to prepare the project for implementation. A Corridor Selection Report (CSR) will be prepared in conjunction with the Tier 1 EIS. The CSR will evaluate a large number of 2000-foot wide corridor alternatives using a multi-level progressive screening process that relies upon topographical, environmental, and other planning information to reduce the number of corridor alternatives to a Reasonable Range of Corridor Build Alternatives. The Reasonable Range of Corridor Build Alternatives will be carried forward into the Tier 1 EIS. Based on their effects on the social, economic, natural environment, the Tier 1 EIS on a broad scale will assess the No Build Alternative (i.e., do-nothing option) and all Corridor Build Alternatives identified through the CSR in more detail leading to a Selected Corridor Alternative. Phased Implementation Plans will be developed for the Corridor Build Alternatives, which will be comprised of Segments of

Independent Utility (SIUs) or shorter segments that could advance as separate, independent projects in the future following completion of the Tier 1 EIS. The primary goal of the Tier 1 EIS is to identify a preferred corridor alternative for the Sonoran Corridor.

Your agency has been identified as one that may have an interest in this project, because of the potential for intergovernmental issues and/or impacts within your agency's legal jurisdiction. With this letter, we extend your agency an invitation to become a participating agency in the development of the Tier 1 EIS for the Sonoran Corridor. This designation does not imply that your agency either supports the proposal or has any special expertise with respect to evaluation of the project.

As a participating agency, you will be afforded the opportunity to identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental or socio-economic impacts that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the project. We suggest that your agency's role in the development of the above project include the following as they relate to your area of expertise:

- Participate in the NEPA process by providing early input on the purpose and need, range of alternatives, methodologies and level of detail required in the corridor selection and environmental studies;
- Identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental or socioeconomic impacts. Participate in the issue resolution process if possible;
- Provide meaningful and timely input on unresolved issues; and
- Participate in coordination meetings, and/or field visits, as appropriate.

Your agency does not have to accept this invitation. If, however, you elect not to become a participating agency, you must decline this invitation in writing, indicating that your agency has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project, no expertise or information relevant to the project, and does not intend to submit comments on the project. The declination may be transmitted electronically to Tremaine Wilson, FHWA Environmental Coordinator, at tremaine.wilson@dot.gov, or Carlos Lopez, ADOT Project Manager, at clopez@azdot.gov. Please include the title of the official responding.

Your agency will be treated as a participating agency unless your written response declining such designation as outlined above is transmitted no later than **Monday, July 31, 2017**.

The FHWA and ADOT greatly appreciate your input, and we invite you to participate in the following Agency Scoping Meeting for the Tier 1 EIS:

Wednesday, June 7, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Pima Association of Governments, Large Conference Room
1 East Broadway Boulevard, Suite 401, Tucson, Arizona

If you are unable to attend the Agency Scoping meeting in person, we will also set up a webinar so you can join the meeting on-line. This information is as follows:

<https://meet.wsp.com/steve.hogan/qd31bygg>

Trouble Joining? Try <https://meet.wsp.com/steve.hogan/qd31bygg?sl=1>

Join by phone: 303 729-1593 (United States, Caller-Paid (West Coast) English)

Find a local number

<https://dialin.americas.pbworld.com/> Conference ID: 2182584

In addition, we invite you to attend the Public Scoping Meetings that will be held for the Sonoran Corridor Tier 1 EIS. The information on these meetings is as follows:

Wednesday, June 7, 2017 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Radisson Hotel Tucson Airport
4550 South Palo Verde Road, Tucson, Arizona

Thursday, June 8, 2017 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Santa Cruz Valley United Methodist Church
71 East Sahuarita Road, Sahuarita, Arizona

Additional information will be forthcoming during the scoping process via the project web site, <http://www.azdot.gov/Sonorancorridor>. If you have questions regarding this invitation or would like addition information, please contact Tremaine Wilson, FHWA Environmental Coordinator, at (602) 382-8970 or tremaine.wilson@dot.gov; or Carlos Lopez, ADOT Project Manager, at (602) 712-4786 or clopez@azdot.gov. Thank you for your cooperation and interest in the Sonoran Corridor Tier 1 EIS.

Sincerely,

Karla S. Petty
Division Administrator

Enclosures

cc: [Additional key agency members]

ecc: Sarah Karasz, ADOT Environmental Coordinator, T100
Tremaine Wilson, FHWA Environmental Coordinator
Carlos Lopez, ADOT Project Manager