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### **Certificate of Coverage Program wins 2018 Common Ground Award**

Pima County's [Certificate of Coverage Program](#) won the 2018 Metropolitan Pima Alliance Common Ground "Programs and Policies" Award, which honors "programs that have made significant contributions toward bridging divides and finding solutions to complex challenges in creative ways."

As part of Pima County's award winning Multi-Species Conservation Plan, the Certificate of Coverage Program eliminates certain conflicts between conservation and economic development. This voluntary program offers property owners an easy way to reduce risk and save money when building a home, subdivision or commercial project in unincorporated Pima County while ensuring that participating projects comply with federal endangered species rules.

"This unique program is the result of staff's and members of the community's dedication to find new ways to solve old problems," said Sherry Ruther, Environmental Planning Manager with the Office of Sustainability and Conservation. "We are thrilled that MPA honored this creative collaboration."

By simplifying requirements for certain federal permits and county regulations, the program allows private development projects to move forward without burdensome delays, while ensuring the region's native wildlife and open spaces are protected. It has created a unique win-win solution for the both the economy and the environment, safeguarding both for the benefit of current and future County residents.

"It was clear from the list of collaborators that this program brought together many different factions of the community to develop a low cost permit that mitigates the risks and costs associated with endangered species as it relates to development of land," said Allyson Solomon, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Pima Alliance. "Additionally, this program demonstrates smart planning by setting aside land to be conserved and enjoyed by the public. It has already demonstrated its effectiveness, as it has saved private developers hundreds of thousands of dollars and enabled smart growth. It is a truly unique program."

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