



Relationship between the Multi-Species Conservation Plan & the Conservation Lands System

In 1997, the Pima County Board of Supervisors initiated the [Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan](#) (SDCP), which is a long-term endeavor intended to achieve balance between the community's economic vitality and the conservation of our natural and cultural heritage. The [Biological Goal](#) of the SDCP, which drives the County's efforts to conserve natural resources, is to:

“Ensure the long-term survival of the full spectrum of plants and animals that are indigenous to Pima County through maintaining or improving the habitat conditions and ecosystem function necessary for the survival.”

An important first step in implementing the SDCP's Biological Goal was the creation and adoption of the [Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System \(CLS\)](#) Map and Conservation Guidelines into the 2001 Comprehensive Plan Update. More recently, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's issuance of an Endangered Species Act Section 10(a)(1)(B) permit and authorization of the County's Multi-species Conservation Plan (MSCP) completed another highly anticipated accomplishment that supports both the SDCP's economic aspirations and its Biological Goal.

The CLS is a valuable source of biological information and was used along with other sources to develop the MSCP. However, this relationship between the CLS and MSCP does not alter the process the Board of Supervisors uses to apply the CLS in its implementation of the Pima County Comprehensive Plan. Nor does it create an obligation to comply with the CLS in order to get coverage under the Section 10 permit. Simply put:

Whether or not the Board of Supervisors required compliance with the CLS is not relevant to a landowner's ability to receive coverage under the Section 10 permit.

Receiving coverage under the Section 10 permit does not require a landowner to comply with the CLS if the Board of Supervisors did not previously impose that requirement.

Receiving coverage under the Section 10 permit does not negate or modify a landowner's responsibility to comply with the CLS if the Board of Supervisors previously imposed that requirement.

Comparing the Multi-Species Conservation Plan & The Conservation Lands System

<u>Maeveen Marie Beehan Conservation Lands System (CLS)</u>	<u>Multi-Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) & Section 10 Permit</u>
<p>What is it? The CLS is mapped biological reserve system that categorizes the county’s priority natural resources and provides land-use guidelines that are consistent with the goals of the SDCP.</p> <p>When was it adopted? The CLS was originally adopted in 2001 as part of the county’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update. It was re-adopted as part of <u>Pima Prospers</u>, the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update.</p> <p>What is the purpose? The CLS serves as the Environmental Element in the County’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which is required by the State of Arizona’s “Growing Smarter” law.</p> <p>How is it implemented? The Board implements the CLS and its conservation guidelines when it considers discretionary land use changes (e.g., rezonings, comprehensive plan amendments) on private property. The CLS and conservation guidelines provide a framework that assists the County in accomplishing the SDCP Biological Goal. <u>The Board of Supervisors applies the CLS guidelines to individual projects.</u></p>	<p>What is it? The MSCP is a set of formal commitments to conserve habitat for species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and other species considered at-risk for federal listing. In exchange for these conservation commitments, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued an ESA Section 10 permit which provides regulatory certainty for development projects (County and participating private landowners).</p> <p>When was it adopted? The Section 10 permit was issued and the MSCP was authorized in July 2016.</p> <p>What is the purpose? The Section 10 permit allows development activities to move forward without the risk of violating the ESA for accidentally harming covered species.</p> <p>How is it implemented? Only the County, and not participating private landowners, is responsible for implementing the MSCP’s conservation commitments including mitigation, monitoring and management obligations. <u>Coverage under the Section 10 permit is available for private development projects if the project is in un-incorporated Pima County and the landowner voluntarily participates in the Certificate of Coverage Program.</u></p>