

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-281

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS,
RELATING TO CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT; RE-AFFIRMING
THE VALUE OF SONORAN DESERT CONSERVATION PLAN,
RECOGNIZING THE CRITICAL ROLE OF MAEVEEN BEHAN IN
DEVELOPING IT, AND RE-NAMING THE CONSERVATION LANDS SYSTEM
AS THE "MAEVEEN MARIE BEHAN CONSERVATION LANDS SYSTEM."**

WHEREAS, Dr. Maeveen Behan has provided leadership for the community response to the listing of the cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl as a federally endangered species, the result of which has been hailed by local, regional and national media, planning and government agencies, and non-profit organizations as a national model for how to respond to the dilemma posed by urban growth and protecting the environment, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan recommended that local government step back from plans to construct certain improvements in the critical habitat of the pygmy-owl at Arthur Pack Park, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan recommended that the County broaden the scope of discussions to other important and vulnerable species as well as infrastructure, taxation, history, archaeology, open space, housing, water, recreation and ranching, and

WHEREAS, instead of limiting the response to the boundaries of unincorporated Pima County, Dr. Behan suggested that the Board of Supervisors open the process to all affected entities, including ranchers, developers, environmental groups, tribal entities, interested citizens, and elected leaders of incorporated cities and towns, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan personally attended more than 600 meetings with citizens and elected officials about the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and made herself available night and day for more than three years, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan communicated complex subjects in manner that was simple to understand, thereby facilitating educated conversations among the community and public officials which resulted in more informed policy decisions and actions; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan and the County Administrator opened access to public policy documents, deliberation and information used in the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan in a way that has established new standards for transparency in local government, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan initiated a year-long educational “bootcamp” that initially many resisted but later admired, to inform stakeholders about the unique economic, cultural and biological conditions of Pima County, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan inspired the scientific community to participate in developing the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan in a way that honored their integrity as scientists without intrusion of jurisdictional concerns or the political pressure of interest groups, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan championed the selection by Pima County government and the broader community of the scientists’ biologically preferred reserve design, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan translated the biologically preferred reserve design into what is now known as the “Conservation Lands System” and shepherded its ultimate adoption as County policy and environmental ethic, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Behan’s incisive reports and presentations on the economic and fiscal characteristics of Pima County created a new understanding of how the Conservation Lands System would mitigate traditional conflicts between conservation of natural and cultural resources and preservation of economic vitality, and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Board adopted the Conservation Lands System as the long-term, local vision for balancing economic integrity and protecting natural resources and cultural heritage in Pima County, and

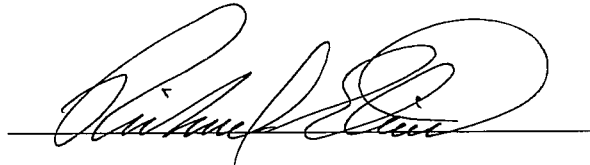
WHEREAS, Dr. Behan created the Sonoran Desert Kids Program to educate and inspire generations of young citizens about the importance of the desert ecosystem, and

WHEREAS, the result of all of the foregoing effort conjoined with the work of others catalyzed support for open-space acquisition, funding for repairing wildlife corridors, improved cooperation among jurisdictions, strengthening of Federal land commitments, revisions of County policies and procedures, and establishment of the Office of Conservation Science and Environmental Policy with Dr. Maeveen Behan as Director;

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

1. Recognizes Dr. Behan's contributions to the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan by re-naming the Conservation Lands System as the "Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System;"
2. Re-affirms the community's commitment to continue implementing the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan through the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System;
3. Directs staff to make available a location within Arthur Pack Park and at other locations within the County reserve system as sites for memorializing Dr. Behan's contributions, subject to conformance with applicable regulations protecting the land.

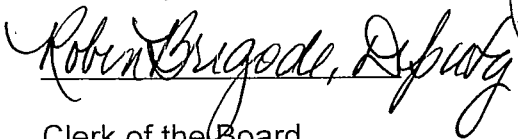
Passed by the Board of Supervisors of Pima County, this 3rd day of November 2009.



Chairman, Pima County Board of Supervisors

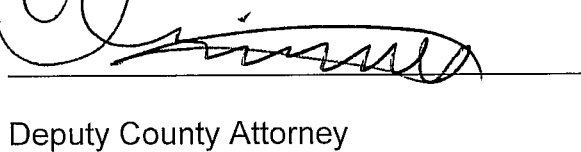
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ATTEST:



Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Deputy County Attorney