

Executive Summary

Calendar year 2019 represents the fourth annual report for Pima County’s Multi-Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The MSCP represents the vehicle by which the County and certain developers may comply with the US Endangered Species Act (via Section 10(a)(1)(B) Incidental Take permit issued July 2016). Pima County and the Regional Flood Control District are joint permittees.

The Section 10 permit authorizes activities that may incidentally harm 44 species (i.e., Covered Species), otherwise known as “take.” Under this permit, the currency used to estimate take is acres of land impacted. Up to 36,000 acres of take is authorized for a period of up to 30 years, in exchange for avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures detailed in the MSCP. The reporting period for the annual report submitted March 1, 2020 is January 1-December 31, 2019.

Take and Mitigation

The table and figures below summarize the number of projects and acres of impact and required mitigation for covered activities under the incidental take permit. Mitigation obligations are quantified using the acreage of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and private projects that acquired a Certificate of Coverage (CofCov).

Table S1. Number of covered projects requiring mitigation, and acres of covered impacts and obligated mitigation by category for calendar year 2019.

	# of Projects Mitigated	Total Take	Obligated Mitigation
CIP	6	59.9 acres	292.6 acres
CofCov	52	137 acres	475.1 acres
2019 Total	60	196.8 acres	767.7 acres

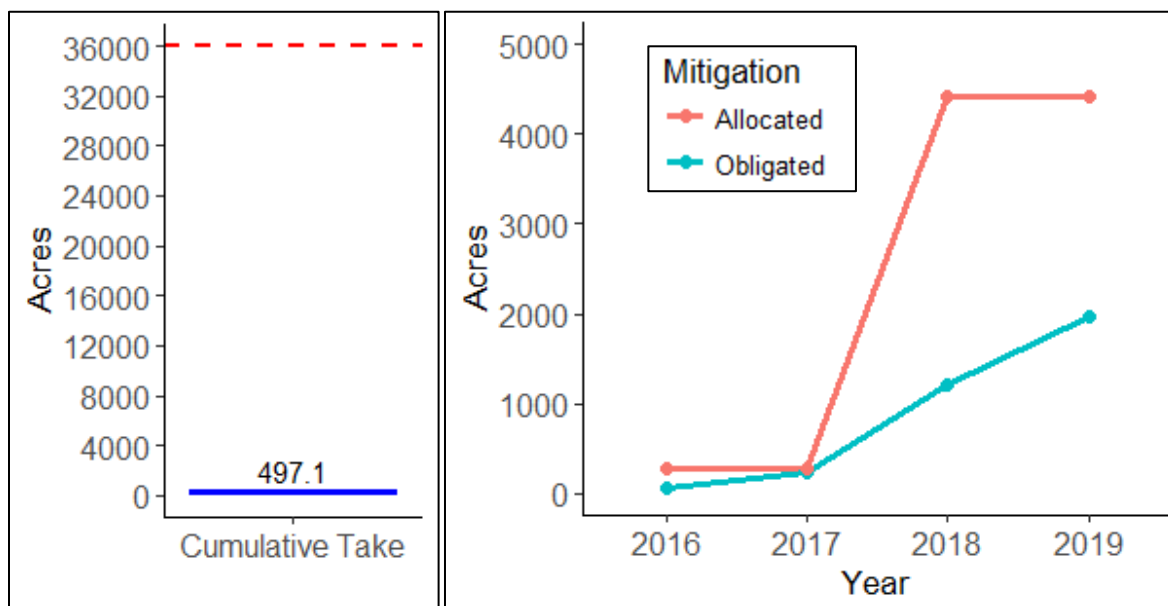


Figure S1. Histogram of cumulative acres of take, 2016-2019 (left). Pima County’s Section 10 permit authorizes up to a total of 36,000 acres of take, shown by dashed red line. Graph of cumulative obligated and allocated mitigation credit by year, 2016-2019 (right).

Notable Achievements

Covering Projects

- The MSCP has covered a total of 164 Capital Improvement Projects completed by the permittees to date.
- A total of 220 private projects have received coverage to date (Private sector coverage is voluntary).
- The MSCP streamlined ESA compliance for three Army Corps of Engineers permits issued to the Regional Flood Control District completed during calendar year 2019.
- The MSCP's take provision was used to stock the endangered Gila topminnow and Huachuca water umbel in a new aquatic feature at the Mission Garden.

Minimizing Habitat Impacts

- The Regional Flood Control District reported that 94.5% of applicants avoided impacting regulated riparian habitat.
- The Pima County Board of Supervisors approved several land-use policies that promote reuse or infill instead of sprawl.

Managing Land

- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service approved a plan for augmenting populations of covered species on our mitigation lands, and another for managing properties along the San Pedro River.
- A new population of Gila topminnow was established in a stream on the County's M Diamond Ranch.
- During 2019, the portfolio of potential mitigation lands increased by approximately 250 acres.
- Pima County staff, contractors, and volunteers mechanically removed or chemically treated approximately 1,470 acres of buffelgrass on County preserve lands.

Monitoring Species and Habitats

- Office of Sustainability and Conservation staff made 623 separate observations on Covered Species; these were reported to the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
- County staff developed comprehensive monitoring protocols for seven monitoring elements, including upland habitat, water resources, landscape pattern change, invasive aquatic and plant species, off-highway vehicles, and climate.
- County staff in partnership with Tucson Audubon Society and the National Park Service established an additional 21 long-term vegetation and soils monitoring plots on County preserve lands.