



Arizona State Trust Lands Conservation Profile: Galiuro Rincon Corridor



Sonoran Institute, in collaboration with conservation groups across Arizona and with funding from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, has assembled state trust lands suitable for conservation into a single database. The resulting profiles focus on conservation values. Political values are left for another day.

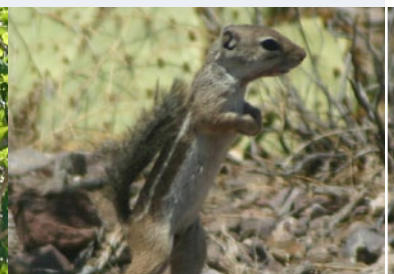
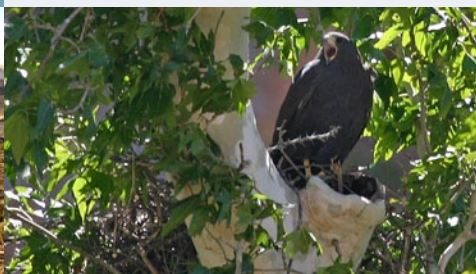
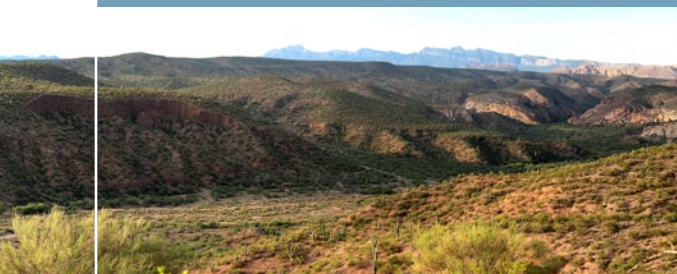


Shaping the Future of the West

LIFELINE LINKAGES

A migratory superhighway runs across the San Pedro River Valley between the Rincon and Galiuro mountain ranges. Approximately 36,000 acres of state trust land held in this part of Cochise, Graham and Pima Counties contributes to the connectivity of this vital landscape corridor between the mountain ranges. Water, so critical in this rugged habitat, flows from canyons on both sides of the valley and feeds the watershed of the lower San Pedro River. This area comprises an intact natural route that supports the movement of wide-ranging species that includes mountain lion, bear, and ringtail coati, officially recognized as Arizona's state mammal. The San Pedro watershed supports the highest diversity of vertebrate species in the inland United States along with more than 400 bird species and 180 species of butterflies.

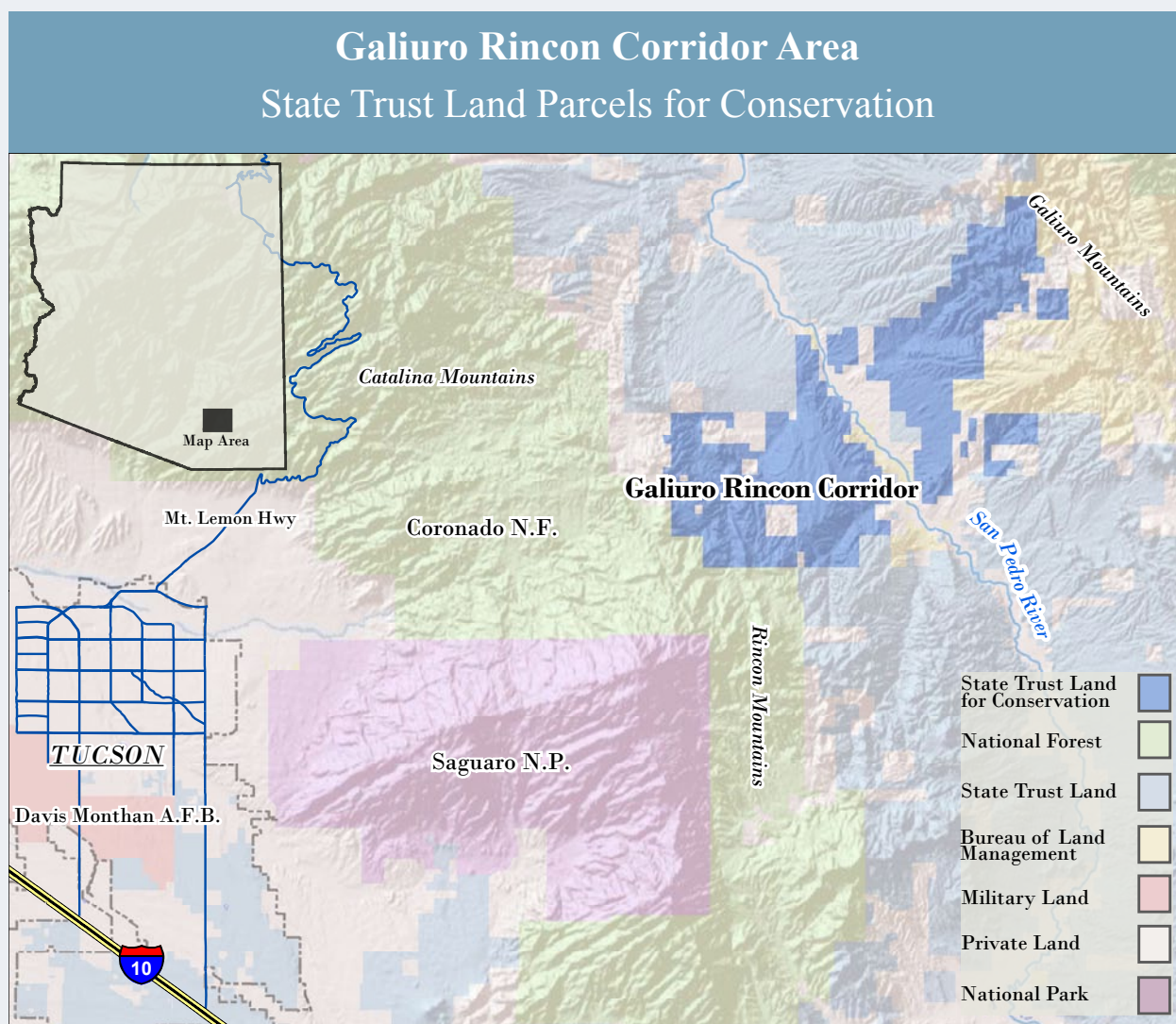
Proposals for an Interstate 10 bypass route and a major utility corridor have been contemplated across this area. Any landscape fragmentation of this size would severely impact wildlife linkages between the Galiuros, the Rincons and the San Pedro River. Although the land in question remains relatively remote, the valley faces the constant pressure of exurban development as well.



LOCATION

Galiuro Rincon Corridor

Northeast of Tucson, up and over the Rincon Mountains, sits the 36,000 acres of state trust land proposed for conservation. The Santa Catalinas sit northwest of the Galiuro Rincon Corridor and Mount Lemmon looms large some 20 miles from the heart of this proposed conservation site.





REASON FOR CONSERVATION

Galiuro Rincon Corridor

The approximately 36,000 acres of state trust land proposed for conservation encompasses semi-desert savannas and valuable riparian forest habitat. Parcels proposed for conservation include mesquite bosques, which have been documented to support the highest breeding bird density of any habitat in North America. Several listed threatened and endangered species will benefit from this landscape-scale conservation effort. One of the most noteworthy is the southwestern willow flycatcher, which nests in cottonwood–willow riparian forests along the river.

The conservation of this state trust land would provide additional assurances that allow a buffer for the mammal and bird superhighway that is thriving just south of the of the small rural community of Redington and a stone's throw away from Tucson.



ARIZONA STATE TRUST LAND

In 1912, the federal government gave 10.5 million acres of state trust lands to the new state of Arizona. These lands are not owned by the state, but are held in trust for the benefit of the state's school system and several other beneficiaries.

Proceeds from the sale or lease of these lands generated about \$50 million for the beneficiaries in 2010. The Arizona State Land Department, in its role as trustee for the beneficiaries, is constitutionally obligated to seek maximum financial return for trust lands.

This requirement has complicated efforts to preserve state trust land for recreational use and environmental protection. The state cannot simply turn a parcel of trust land into a park or nature preserve since it is required to receive full market value for the land. All state trust land is subject to sale or lease to the highest bidder. Preservation of trust land requires sustained community input coupled with legislative action.



STATE TRUST LAND CONSERVATION

Collaborating Partners

The Cascabel Conservation Association is dedicated to the collaborative stewardship of the Middle San Pedro River watershed in a way that promotes the health, stability and diversity of the whole community, including its earth, waters, plants, and animals. We strive to integrate the needs of the land with the needs of a sustainable human community through educational, economic, agricultural, contemplative and other conservation-related endeavors. The Cascabel Conservation Association is headquartered 12 miles southeast of Redington, Arizona, in the heart of the Rincon Galiuro Corridor.

The Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust seeks to help people in need, especially women, children and families; to protect animals and nature; and to enrich community life in the metropolitan areas of Indianapolis and Phoenix.

The Sonoran Institute inspires and enables community decisions and public policies that respect the land and people of western North America. Facing rapid change, communities in the West value their natural and cultural resources, which support resilient environmental and economic systems. Founded in 1990, the Sonoran Institute helps communities conserve and restore those resources and manage growth and change through collaboration, civil dialogue, sound information, practical solutions and big-picture thinking. The Sonoran Institute is a nonprofit organization with offices in Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona; Bozeman, Montana; Glenwood Springs, Colorado; Sheridan, Wyoming; Twentynine Palms, California; and Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico.



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