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Emily Garber
Field Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Lower Sonoran Field Office
LS-SDNM RMP
21605 North 7th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85027

Ms. Garber:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Lower Sonoran and Sonoran Desert National Monument Draft Resource Management Plan/Draft-Environmental Impact Statement. After reviewing the draft RMP/EIS, MAG staff has comments regarding the lack of detail in the travel management section of the report and map 3-24.

MAG has completed several transportation studies in the past few years including the Interstate 10/Hassayampa Valley Transportation Framework Study and the Interstate 8/10 Hidden Valley Transportation Framework Study that has identified transportation networks that will be needed to accommodate the future growth and travel demand in Maricopa County. None of the transportation recommendations that were included in the MAG studies are included or illustrated in the draft RMP/EIS. The travel management section of the draft EIS also does not accurately reflect the existing transportation networks of the cities or towns that are located in the draft RMP/EIS study area. When proposing alternatives to the public for comment, MAG would recommend that you accurately illustrate the existing and future transportation networks in Maricopa County.

It should be noted, that the Nevada Department of Transportation and the Arizona Department of Transportation is initiating an Interstate 11 (Hassayampa Freeway) Feasibility Study in January of 2012 that will examine the proposed transportation corridor from the Interstate 8/Interstate 10 junction in Pinal County, through the little rainbow valley, north to the Wickenburg planning area and continuing through the State of Nevada. As discussed in prior meetings with the BLM regarding the Hassayampa Freeway, the current Hassayampa Freeway alignment traverses through the BLM management area along the northern boundary of the Sonoran Desert National Monument, inside the designated existing utility corridor. Included on page one of the attached comments, MAG recommends that the proposed Hassayampa Freeway be identified on future BLM transportation maps as a "proposed transportation corridor".

I recommend that we meet to discuss different strategies for MAG and BLM to work together regarding future transportation corridors and BLM projects. Please contact me or Tim Strow at the MAG office (602)254-6300 if you need any clarification regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Eric Anderson
Transportation Director

A Voluntary Association of Local Governments in Maricopa County

Attachment A
**Lower Sonoran and Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) Draft Resource Management Plan/
Draft-Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/EIS).**

After Reviewing the Draft SDNM and DRMP/EIS MAG has included the following comments and recommendations:

1. **Map 3-24, Travel Management:** Please include existing and future transportation plans for the cities and towns located within or in close proximity to the DRMP/EIS study area. This also includes but not limited to the following transportation plans:
 - Interstate 10/ Hassayampa Valley Transportation Framework Study (<http://www.bqaz.org/>)
 - Interstate 8/10 Hidden Valley Transportation Framework Study (<http://www.bqaz.org/>)
 - Maricopa Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan (<http://www.azmag.gov/>)
 - Hidden Waters Parkway Feasibility Study (<http://www.mcdot.maricopa.gov/>)
2. **Map 3-24, Travel Management:** Please add the Hassayampa Freeway as a “proposed transportation corridor”.
3. **Map 3-24, Travel Management:** In addition to roadways, please identify the all Union Pacific Rail lines in the study area. This includes the union pacific sunset line, wellton branch, phoenix subdivision etc.
4. **Map 3-24, Travel Management:** Please include on map state lands, city/town planning areas, military facilities (training areas), Native American reservations etc.