



1 **3.4 Recreation**

2 **3.4.1 Summary of Draft Tier 1 EIS**

3 The analysis focused on recreation sites/areas for which any portion is contained within the  
4 2,000-foot-wide corridors of the Build Corridor Alternatives. Recreation resources were identified  
5 through a review of websites and local, state, and federal plans. Recreation sites that currently  
6 exist, are under construction, or are within a regulatory permitting stage are included.

7 Federal, state, and local agencies that provide recreation opportunities and facilities in the Study  
8 Area include USFS, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), NPS, AGFD, Arizona State Parks and  
9 Trails, Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), and local and county governments. Recreation  
10 locales on federal lands managed by BLM, NPS, and USFS include two National Monuments,  
11 one National Park, one National Historical Park, and one National Historic Trail. Recreation  
12 sites/areas on BLM lands include primarily trails, while USFS and NPS areas contain more  
13 developed facilities, such as campgrounds and picnic areas. The Study Area also includes three  
14 designated wilderness areas – two within the Sonoran Desert National Monument and one  
15 within Saguaro National Park. State, county, and municipal parks also provide recreation  
16 opportunities.

17 Permanent impacts from the Project could include changes to the recreation setting, increased  
18 access to recreational areas, altered experience at recreation locales, and reduced size of  
19 recreation areas. The Project could also result in the permanent loss of acreage for recreation  
20 opportunities, such as hunting, particularly along corridor options not co-located with an existing  
21 interstate. Although recreation opportunities may continue to be available after the construction  
22 of I-11, the settings in which they occur could be affected visually or audibly, access to  
23 recreation areas may change, and some users may choose to recreate elsewhere. Increased  
24 access may attract more visitors to certain recreational areas.

25 The BLM-owned Vulture Mine Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) consists of approximately  
26 70,000 acres south of Wickenburg, Arizona. Both the Purple and Green Alternatives go through  
27 the western portion of the property, in what BLM identified as a multi-use corridor in the  
28 *Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource Management Plan* (RMP) (BLM 2010). The RMP defines this  
29 multi-use corridor as being for major utilities and regionally significant transportation uses. The  
30 RMP specifies that BLM will coordinate with ADOT in advancing such transportation uses in  
31 multi-use corridors. Overlapping the multi-use corridor within the Vulture Mine RMZ is the  
32 Vulture Mine Off-road Challenge Race Course for off-highway vehicles. The Purple and Green  
33 Alternatives bisect the race course. ADOT has committed to providing connectivity across I-11  
34 for continued use of the race course.

35 **3.4.2 Summary of Changes Since Draft Tier 1 EIS**

36 Agency and public feedback focused on potential impacts to local parks, Saguaro National Park,  
37 Tucson Mountain Park, and Ironwood Forest National Monument; access to recreation  
38 resources; and the economic value of outdoor recreation. NPS cited general concerns about  
39 impacts to Saguaro National Park, especially the wilderness located within the park, and  
40 focused specifically on noise, visual impacts, and air quality. Saguaro National Park, Tucson



1 Mountain Park, and Ironwood Forest National Monument are outside the 2,000-foot-wide Build  
2 Corridor Alternatives.

3 An analysis of the impacts on resources within Saguaro National Park can be found in **Section**  
4 **3.8** (Noise), **Section 3.9** (Visual Resources), and **Section 3.10** (Air Quality). Additionally,  
5 **Chapter 4** (Draft Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation) contains details regarding recreational  
6 properties afforded Section 4(f) protection within the Study Area. In the Draft Tier 1 EIS, the  
7 Vulture Mine RMZ was referred to as the Vulture Mountains RMZ. BLM clarified the correct  
8 name of the property to be Vulture Mine RMZ.

9 Several resource agencies requested that the Tier 1 EIS include a comprehensive list of federal,  
10 state, and local plans for managing recreation resources. BLM requested that the Final Tier 1  
11 EIS describe BLM policies and regulations for managing recreation. ADOT will coordinate with  
12 the appropriate land-managing agencies during the Tier 2 analysis to identify which project-  
13 specific laws, policies, and plans apply.

14 Reclamation requested that the Final Tier 1 EIS discuss the CAP canal trail. The CAP canal is a  
15 336-mile canal that brings Colorado River water to central and southern Arizona. During  
16 construction of the CAP canal, beginning in 1973, Reclamation anticipated the development of a  
17 multi-use recreational trail along the entire length of the canal and, wherever possible, acquired  
18 sufficient land to allow for a trail to be developed. The Tortolita CAP Trail is listed in **Table 4-3**  
19 (in **Chapter 4** [Draft Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation] of this Final Tier 1 EIS) as a property  
20 outside the Build Corridor Alternatives.

### 21 **3.4.3 No Build Alternative**

22 If the No Build Alternative is selected, I-11 would not be constructed, and vehicles would  
23 continue to utilize the existing transportation network. Only programmed projects would be  
24 implemented under this alternative, including pavement preservation and other maintenance  
25 projects. The No Build Alternative would not result in impacts to recreation areas beyond  
26 already identified improvement projects.

### 27 **3.4.4 Recommended Alternative**

28 The Recommended Alternative would have similar effects to recreation resources in the region  
29 as the other Build Corridor Alternatives. The Project could alter the recreational setting of the  
30 Study Area, increase access to recreational areas, and reduce recreational opportunities, such  
31 as hunting, on public and private lands. Increased access could either deter or attract visitors to  
32 certain recreation areas. The Recommended Alternative goes through the Vulture Mine RMZ in  
33 a BLM-designated multi-use corridor, as well as the western portion of the Vulture Mine Off-road  
34 Challenge Race Course. ADOT commits to providing connectivity across I-11 for continued use  
35 of the race course.

36 **Table 3.4-1** presents an inventory of the recreational properties within the 2,000-foot-wide  
37 corridor of the Recommended Alternative. Specific impacts and mitigation requirements at the  
38 property level will be determined during Tier 2. For additional information on the properties listed  
39 in **Table 3.4-1**, refer to **Chapter 4** (Draft Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation).



1 **3.4.5 Preferred Alternative**

2 The Preferred Alternative could alter the recreational setting of the Study Area, increase access  
3 to recreational areas, and reduce the opportunities for hunting on public and private lands. The  
4 Preferred Alternative goes through the Vulture Mine RMZ, as well as the Vulture Mine Off-road  
5 Challenge Race Course within the BLM-designated multi-use corridor. ADOT commits to  
6 providing connectivity across I-11 for continued use of the race course.

7 **Table 3.4-1** presents an inventory of recreational properties within the 2,000-foot-wide corridor  
8 of the Preferred Alternative. Specific impacts and mitigation requirements at the property level  
9 will be determined during Tier 2.

10 **Table 3.4-1. Inventory of Recreational Properties in the 2,000-foot-wide Corridors**  
11 **of the Recommended and Preferred Alternatives by Geography**

Geography	Recommended Alternative	Preferred Alternative with West Option in Pima County	Preferred Alternative with East Option in Pima County
Nogales to Sahuarita	Tumacácori National Historical Park Juan Baustista de Anza National Historic Trail	Tumacácori National Historical Park Juan Baustista de Anza National Historic Trail	
Sahuarita to Marana	Anamax Park	Anamax Park	Anamax Park Bonita Park Camino de la Tierra Trailhead Cañada del Oro (Christina-Taylor Green Memorial River Park) David G. Herrera and Ramon Quiroz Park El Parque de San Cosme El Paso and Southwestern Greenway Estevan Park Francisco Elias Esquer Park Gethsemane Garden of Prayer Julian Wash Archaeological Park Julian Wash Greenway La Mar Park Mike Jacobs Sports Park Pima Community College, Desert Vista Campus Pima Prickly Park Rillito River Park Rillito Vista Neighborhood Park

Geography	Recommended Alternative	Preferred Alternative with West Option in Pima County	Preferred Alternative with East Option in Pima County
			San Lucas Community Park Santa Cruz River Park Sweetwater Wetlands Park Ted Walker Park
Marana to Casa Grande	No parks identified	No parks identified	No parks identified
Casa Grande to Buckeye	Palo Verde Regional Park Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Management Area	Palo Verde Regional Park Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Management Area Robbins Butte Wildlife Area Buckeye Hills Regional Park (County) Buckeye Hills East SRMA (BLM) Buckeye Hills West Extensive Recreation Management Area (BLM)	
Buckeye to Wickenburg	Vulture Mine RMZ Vulture Mine Off-Road Challenge Race Course Hassayampa SRMA	Vulture Mine RMZ Vulture Mine Off-Road Challenge Race Course Hassayampa SRMA	

1 SRMA = Special Resource Management Area

2 **3.4.6 Mitigation and Tier 2 Analysis**

3 **3.4.6.1 Tier 2 Analysis Commitments**

4 FHWA and ADOT completed an initial level of analysis in this Final Tier 1 EIS to identify a  
5 2,000-foot-wide corridor for the preferred Build Corridor Alternative. Additional analysis in Tier 2  
6 will inform (1) the selection of a specific alignment (approximately 400 feet wide) within the  
7 selected 2,000-foot-wide corridor and (2) the selection of the west option or east option in Pima  
8 County. Tier 2 analysis will also identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to  
9 recreation resources. Specifically, ADOT commits to carrying out the following analysis during  
10 the Tier 2 process:

- 11 • **T2-Recreation-1:** Coordinate with the appropriate land-managing agencies during the Tier 2  
12 analysis to identify applicable laws, policies, and plans for each recreation site.
- 13 • **T2-Recreation-2:** Coordinate with BLM when advancing transportation uses in the multi-use  
14 corridor within the Vulture Mine RMZ.
- 15 • **T2-Recreation-3:** Update the list of recreational resources within the project-level Study  
16 Area and identify the temporary and permanent impacts to each resource.
- 17 • **T2-Recreation-4:** Review recreation planning documents applicable to the Study Area.
- 18 • **T2-Recreation-5:** Identify site-specific mitigation measures at recreation resources.



1 **3.4.6.2 Mitigation Commitments**

2 As required by NEPA, FHWA and ADOT considered measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate  
3 impacts to recreation resources from the Project (generally referred to as mitigation measures)  
4 during this Tier 1 process. Specific mitigation that ADOT is committing to implement if a Build  
5 Alternative is selected includes:

- 6 • **MM-Recreation-1:** Provide connectivity across I-11 for continued use of the Vulture Mine  
7 Off-Road Challenge Race Course in the Vulture Mine RMZ.
- 8 • **MM-Recreation-2:** If the Preferred Alternative with west option is selected during Tier 2  
9 studies, address updated access routes to Saguaro National Park and Tucson Mountain  
10 Park due to the relocation of Sandario Road on either end of the Tucson Mitigation Corridor  
11 as part of the CAP Design Option.
- 12 • **MM-Recreation-3:** Evaluate connection between the two segments of the Palo Verde  
13 Regional Park in western Pinal County.

14 **3.4.6.3 Additional Mitigation to be Evaluated in Tier 2**

15 During the Tier 2 process, ADOT will evaluate mitigation measures in addition to those listed  
16 above, to include best practices, permit requirements, and/or other mitigation strategies  
17 suggested by agencies or the public. Examples of measures that ADOT may evaluate in Tier 2  
18 include:

- 19 • Design route to avoid or minimize impacts on the recreation properties and use of recreation  
20 properties.
- 21 • Maintain access to recreation areas and continue to provide connectivity between recreation  
22 areas/lands and trails.
- 23 • Schedule construction to avoid peak recreation seasons and special events, including  
24 hunting and birdwatching seasons, when possible.
- 25 • Include context-sensitive design in future stages of project development.
- 26 • Develop natural design features, such as earthen berms and vegetative plantings.
- 27 • Include design features, such as fencing and designated crossings, to protect the safety of  
28 those using the recreation area.
- 29 • Develop traffic plans that minimize access limitations during construction, minimize the  
30 duration of access disruption, and provide on-site and online information about alternative  
31 access options.
- 32 • Apply ADOT Noise Abatement Requirements (ADOT 2017m), including potential use of  
33 temporary and permanent noise barriers (if not already present) adjacent to parks.



- 1 • Locate construction staging and temporary construction easements away from recreation
- 2 sites to the extent possible.

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