

<p>Area of Focus THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</p>	
<p>Current status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Among threats to the natural environment are invasive species and continued land development that encroaches on native and wild spaces. ● Pima County is one of the most biologically diverse and also one of the fastest growing counties in the US. ● The Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan is a highly ambitious habitat conservation plan that aims to save the Sonoran Desert from poorly planned growth while maintaining a strong economy. ● The plan provides many opportunities for getting involved. 	
<p>What is the ideal scenario, and what are the limiters?</p> <p>Ideally, humans would live harmoniously with the natural world and “leave no trace.” Obstacles include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Population growth and land development threaten natural spaces. <p>Human-generated pollutants, herbicides/pesticides, and waste degrade the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Millions of dollars are spent annually on invasive species removal and repairing damage from the impact of fast spreading nonnatives. ● There is apathy, personal dissociation, and limited public awareness and education. ● Creation of proper legislation depends on our elected officials; enforcement of the laws depends on agency funding, 	
<p>Our club’s public message on this area of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We advocate for responsible development (ex: utilizing infill), minimization of continued destruction of natural habitats, elimination of invasive plant and animal species, and support of existing native wildlife. ● Local economies depend on preservation of the environment. ● We endorse elected officials who support and advocate for protection of our natural spaces, and wisely use taxpayer dollars to do so. 	
<p>Actions our club can take</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase awareness of key species affected by humans, spread the word to the community, and change personal behaviors to serve as an ambassador. ● Participate in cleanups and invasive species removal such as buffelgrass. ● Participate in plant and animal rescues. ● Plant native species to improve the environment and create habitat for native plant and animal species. ● Advocate for endangered species protections. ● Question elected officials about their stance on environmental protections. ● Support and volunteer for organizations/agencies that protect wild spaces, such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection ○ Tucson Audubon “Habitat at Home” ○ Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society Native Plant Rescues ○ Center for Biological Diversity 	
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tucson Clean & Beautiful ● Pima County Invasive Species Management Plan 	

