

PIMA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

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For immediate release

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PAG Regional Council Adopts Resolution on Buffelgrass Threat

The Pima Association of Governments' Regional Council adopted a resolution Thursday adding its voice to highlight the growing threat posed by the invasive plant known as buffelgrass. The action is a strong endorsement of the need for greater coordination to stem the advance of buffelgrass in the greater Tucson region.

In the Tucson region, buffelgrass, is a state-listed noxious weed that, is spreading rapidly to colonize large areas of the Sonoran desert. If allowed to grow unchecked, buffelgrass will slowly, but inevitably, alter the region's natural ecology by replacing desert cactus with a flammable and unsightly weed. Already, thousands of acres of desert are infested with this invasive plant and it can be found in parklands, along roadsides, and on vacant lots. Once you know what to look for, buffelgrass can be spotted in every part of the greater Tucson region.

Buffelgrass readily burns and already this year, there have been several buffelgrass fires reported. The threat of fires resulting in the loss of existing natural desert environment, with damaging economic impacts, is growing.

The resolution adopted by the Regional Council encourages each of PAG's member jurisdictions to evaluate the extent that buffelgrass is present within their communities and to pursue buffelgrass removal or treatment. The resolution also

urges Governor Napolitano to prioritize and fund buffelgrass control efforts by state

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agencies to effectively remove buffelgrass from state rights-of-way by 2009.

To implement the resolution, PAG staff will help coordinate the regional response to buffelgrass. For more details on how the region is responding to the challenges posed by buffelgrass, a new Web site has been established. For more information, visit www.buffelgrass.org.

Pima Association of Governments is comprised of local, state and tribal governments with a mission to build consensus among its members and the public on regional planning for transportation, air quality and water quality. PAG's staff gathers and analyzes data, provide accurate information, and coordinate an open and cooperative planning process to promote good decision-making for the region.