



Arizona/Sonora Regional Workgroup

2019-2020 Action Plan Closing Summary

On-going activities*

March 2021

The purpose of the Arizona/Sonora 2019-2020 Action Plan is to track, assess, and report progress towards achieving Border 2020 Goals and Objectives. The Action Plan includes program commitments, timeframes and outputs for activities undertaken by United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S.EPA) and Program partners working to improve environmental conditions in border communities of the Arizona-Sonora region.

**Note: Due to COVID-19 some projects might have challenges and may change deliverables on a case-to-case basis. <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>*

Summary of 2019-2020 Action Plan

The 2019-2020 Action Plan summarized 41 projects and initiatives. Sixteen projects have been completed and 25 efforts are on-going (see Table 1). Assessment of progress made showed:

- 56% of the projects achieved significant progress or were completed.

On-going Activities

Below is a summary of new, on-going, and completed efforts funded through several U.S.EPA resources and programs including Border 2020, Clean Air Act 105 funding, Solid Waste Disposal Act, and other resources from Border 2020 partners.

Goal 1 - Air

- Operated an Ozone Monitor in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora including the implementation of regular equipment maintenance and Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) checks in coordination with the state of Sonora's environmental agency.
- Obtained a "Site Access Agreement between State of Sonora Ecology and Sustainable Development Commission (CEDES) and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)" that allows ADEQ staff to access the site to install and operate a NO_x Monitor in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora. The monitor will lead to better understanding of NO_x pollution in the binational airshed of Arizona/Sonora border region. Deployment of new instrument is delayed due to travel restrictions during the pandemic.

Goal 2 – Water

- Continue to implement Arizona State University's water quality project that is working to produce a binational and sustainable strategy to address stormwater control, urban flooding, and water quality concerns in the Ambos Nogales area. The project will use digital mapping to identify optimal location of GI (Green Infrastructure) interventions in the watershed to evaluate stormwater runoff reduction in each city. ASU has conducted two

workshops and school-based programming (two demonstration projects) to share project information at local middle schools in Nogales, Sonora and Nogales, Arizona.*

- Completed a water pilot project in the community of Nogales, Sonora. Efforts created green infrastructure structures (biofilters) for trapping waste and solids originated within the city. Coordinated efforts of the Municipal Planning Institute of Nogales (IMIP) and the Watershed Management Group, a non-profit, worked to improve water quality that runs through Cañada El Muerto in Nogales. The team installed biofilters using large rocks (gabion) that captures 650 cubic meters of sediment to decrease sediment loading, which can break collection pipes and sewer lines. Also, a demonstration planter, within its first three months, captured about 37,000 liters of rainwater and volunteers removed 10 tons of garbage from streams and implemented 6 trainings and awareness courses to over 300 workshop attendees.

Goal 3 – Materials Management and Clean Sites

- In 2019, staff of the municipality of Nogales, Sonora initiated created best practices to safely dismantle scrap (end-of-life) vehicles. Actions and progress include a strategic plan, promotion of educational workshops, compliance assistance as enforcement efforts in the city. Grantee is using the “Processing End-of-Life Vehicles: A Guide for Environmental Protection, Safety and Profit in the United States-Mexico Border Area” developed by USEPA and SEMARNAT to implement the project:
https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-10/documents/eol_vehicle_guide_final_english.pdf
Final outputs include the creation of a database that will hold information of registered junk vehicles, as the collection of centers that receive auto parts resulting from the dismantling of such vehicles. Effort is continuing into 2021.*
- CAFES UNISON A.C., affiliated with the University of Sonora, has adapted the state of Arizona Department of Environmental Quality's guidance for e-waste best management practices for use in the municipalities of Nogales, Agua Prieta, and San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora (<https://azdeq.gov/e-Waste>). Efforts include the training of staff and implement collection events to include final reuse and proper disposal of electronic products. The main objective is to establish a collection mechanism with adequate frequency of electronic devices and household appliances so that they can be recycled and not be disposed in clandestine dumps or in landfills in these border communities.

Goal 4 – Emergency Preparedness and Response

- During last 18 months, Sister-City Emergency Plans were updated in several of the Arizona/Sonora border communities. Sister City Plans establish the policies, responsibilities, and procedures required to protect the health and safety of the populace, environment, public and private property from the effects of any incident. These efforts are done in close coordination with local fire departments, universities, and other appropriate community representatives.

Fundamental Strategy: Environmental Health

- Implemented the Ask the Experts: Wildfire Smoke, Mental Health and Green Cleaning Sanitizing Disinfecting Virtual Webinar (bilingual) with over 160 participants. Additionally, three public bilingual service announcements were made with ~650 views to date associated with the event. Bilingual PSAs include information on wildfire smoke and children's health, access to air quality data (AirNow), and understanding of the Air Quality Index. Program recordings of the webinar, PSAs and PowerPoints are available at the website below with ~75 views to date on the site:
<https://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder/webinarask-experts-wildfire-smoke-mental-health-andgreen-cleaning-sanitizing>.
- The University of Arizona and other local partners continue to collaborate on pest related pollution prevention and emergency preparedness through integrated pest management education effort in three tribal communities: Tohono O'odham Nation, the Cocopah Tribe, and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Efforts have identified capacity building and training needs and have implemented four workshops focused on specific environmental health priorities as identified by each tribal community. Project continue in 2021*.

**Table 1:
Summary of active and on-going projects
Arizona-Sonora Action Plan 2019-2020**

Goals	Air	Water	Waste	Emergency	Health	Totals
Deliverable Achieved	3	2	1	2	8	16
Significant Progress	1		1	1	4	7
Moderate Progress		2	2		6	10
Initial Progress	3				2	5
No Progress		1	1		1	3
TOTAL	7	5	5	3	21	41