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County takes over study of desert conservation plan

Associated Press
 March 20, 2002 11:00:00

TUCSON - Pima County will conduct its own economic impact study of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan after a Phoenix firm hired to do it has quit.

The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday in favor of an in-house look at potential economic impacts from the still-developing land conservation plan.

The Morrison Institute of Arizona State University, hired last year to do the economic impact study for \$169,000, quit last month amid complaints that the county failed to provide the institute with data needed to complete the work.

County officials contend that the institute lacked the computer software to process the county's data, and that institute staffers didn't tell the county about the problem until January.

The study was to be completed by the end of February.

Home builders are concerned about the conservation plan's impact on their business and claim a study done by the county would lack credibility.

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