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MEMORANDUM

Date: February 8, 2011
To: Parks and Recreation Department Commissioners
From: R.J. Cardin, Director
Re: **Director's Summary of Current Events**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R.J. Cardin".

Listed below are issues that the department has been involved with since the January 11, 2011 Director's Summary.

Budget

General Fund (100) – Agency 300 - On the expenditure side, the General Fund is currently reporting expenditures 29% or \$102,813 under the year to date (YTD) budget. There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305 - Enhancement Fund is currently reporting revenue at 25% or \$286,287 over the YTD budget. Enhancement Fund is currently 6.4% or \$111,601 under the YTD operating budget for expenditures.

Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302 - Lake Fund is currently reporting revenues at 23% or \$159,203 over the YTD budget. Lake Fund is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 5.4% or \$48,008

Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306 - Spur Cross is currently reporting revenues at 10% or \$7,956 over the YTD budget. Spur Cross is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 15% or \$23,225.

Superintendent Reports

Cave Creek Regional Park - The Park hosted 26 interpretive programs in January with a total of 447 participants. The Full Moon Clay Mine hike was the most popular program in January with 140 visitors in attendance. The Park also offered Ride with the Ranger; Tiny Tumbleweed Trekking: Bugs!; Clay Mine Mysteries; Incredible Edibles; Creature Feature: Bugs! Fitness Series; "Walk this Way" Veterinarian Led Dog Walk; and Amazing Plants.

Camping season is in full swing and on the weekends the campground has been in overflow.

The Interpretive Ranger is in the process of remodeling the animal exhibit room. Staff is also upgrading the tortoise exhibit located by the maintenance compound and converting the location into a quarantine area for sick or injured park tortoises.

The Interpretive Ranger will be conducting archery training for staff and Park hosts in February. The new archery program will be implemented in March once all training is complete.

Desert Outdoor Center - For the second year approximately 30 U.S. Naval Sea Cadets from around the country spent the week between Christmas and New Years conducting training activities at the Desert Outdoor Center. Their presence adds additional revenue during a time that the facility is sparsely used and it represents new opportunities for our developing aquatics program.

"Paddle on Pleasant," a training program cooperatively offered by the County, US Coast Guard Auxiliary and AZ Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), was attended by a capacity crowd of 26 eager novice kayakers. Classroom training in the morning was conducted at the nearby AZGFD headquarters and after lunch moved to the DOC for on-the-water experience. The full-day program was a success, and laid the foundation for further cooperative endeavors between the respective parties.

Aquatics training promises to be a growing venture at the center. Potential partners include the Boy Scouts of America (Grand Canyon Council); Arizona Game and Fish Department; Coast Guard Auxiliary; Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department; as well as several private groups and businesses. Elements of the aquatics program are being rolled into the DOC's business plan, and a cooperative agreement with the Boy Scouts is under development. One area of aquatics training that offers the most potential for growth is the period from August through May when Boy Scout summer camp is not in session.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park - Park attendance and revenue at Estrella was significantly higher than the last three years. The Park presented 37 interpretive programs including Hiking to our "Gold Mine" with panning for Gold; Meeting our Desert Tortoises; Hike to "Grandpa Saguaro; and the Junior Ranger program. The Desert Runner Trail Series "Coldwater Rumble brought nearly 200 contestants to compete in running events of 9K, 18K 32K and 50K. On Saturday January 16th the Indo-American Foundation not only filled Ramada 9, but they also filled the sky with kites.

A proposal for a beginner mountain bike loop at the competitive track was presented. After meetings with the leader of a mountain bike club in the area and our trails supervisor, this learning loop has been designed. It will be a flat loop with pullouts (teaching stations) that will have obstacles and signs with information on how to navigate these obstacles.

The Park staff has been busy the past several months planning the Tres Rios Nature and Earth Festival being held on March 5th while also meeting with the Three Rivers Historical Society for a Centennial Project.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: Basic Archery training conducted by AZGFD was held on January 12th with Rangers from other parks in attendance. Those who could not attend were given the contact name and dates of future trainings. Archery programs at the lake will begin once all equipment is received and logistics set.

The North Lake Pleasant Planning Committee (NLPPC) continues to gather information toward a Recreational Module and Goals toward planning Recreation Zones in that part of the park. The NLPPC Technical Team continues to work on road inventory data, recreation zones and the effects of cattle in riparian areas on the north end.

The Lake Pleasant Adventure Day planning has begun and this year will offer much more to the public! Vendors from all types of 'adventure' businesses will be on-site with activities, demonstrations, etc. Attendees already include horses, remote control flying planes, helicopter, seaplanes, scuba shops, and much more.

REI and Lake Pleasant are currently working on a family campout in celebration of the Great American Backyard Campout held nationwide on June 25th. The current location for the campout is at the group campground. Both agencies are currently reviewing an itinerary which will include activities, paddling on the lake, visit to the visitor center, etc.

Lake Pleasant and the City of Phoenix Daring Adventures are currently looking into some adaptive and inclusive partnership opportunities. Topics discussed included the use of kayak tours around the lake with an added interpretive piece.

Local clubs (i.e. AZ Yacht Club) have been contacted to gauge any interest in teaching various programs at the park or connecting us with trained volunteers. The general public has expressed interest in learning sailing, photography of nature, etc and we hope to offer some of these programs to the public with classroom or training portions to be held at the DOC and hands-on lake-side.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park - Interpretive Ranger Amy Ford conducted 32 scheduled interpretive programs and 3 programs which were special requests for groups in the park.

The Mountain Bike Association of Arizona began their series of mountain bike races which will determine the state champion in several categories. The eight race series began in McDowell on the third weekend over two days of racing.

Pivot Cycles, an Arizona based mountain bike manufacturer known for their widely acclaimed award winning bicycles, brought their new 2011 models to McDowell in January. They had a very successful day providing local dealers and the public with an opportunity to ride the new models.

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San Tan Mountain Regional Park – The Park offered 17 interpretive programs and activities during the fiscal month of January. The programs brought in 326 excited park guests. The program highlights of the month were the Movie Madness Day; Full Moon Hike; and Talk with the Animals.

The San Tan Interpretive Ranger and Park Supervisor participated in an international style archery training program at Lake Pleasant – through the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD). The training will allow San Tan the opportunity to provide archery-related programs at San Tan utilizing resources (including bows, arrows, safety curtains, and more) from the AZGFD.

Park staff repaired water lines near the visitor center and memorial and removed excessive drip lines to increase efficiencies to improve water conservation at the park.

An Eagle Scout established a beautiful, rustic split-rail fence near the memorial and pond area located near the visitor center. The fence will help keep vehicles from damaging vegetation in the area and keep park users from walking off trail in these areas.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area – The Park offered 23 interpretive programs with 253 folks in attendance.

Staff has been documenting and developing an archery hunting management option for the Town of Cave Creek to consider.

Usery Mountain Regional Park – The Park hosted 58 interpretive programs in January with a total of 2,214 participants and 690 repeat attendees. Geology (93) and Venomous Critters (122) were crowd-pleasers along with the live owl presentations for the Full Moon Hike (270). The All About Brown-bag lecture series continues to be the most popular with all ages in attendance. The home school mornings were crazy with cricket races, catapulting kitties and laughing children. Next month's highlight - cow eyes are slated for dissection!

White Tank Mountain Regional Park: The Park started the month with the fun and smooth running Xterra AZ Trail Race—the first one ever held at White Tank. There were 278 participants enjoying a beautiful sunrise and desert scenery. Several attendees noted the improvements on the new Waddell Trail and many were first time visitors to the park.

The Park had 22 programs with 1,247 visitors in attendance. The programs included the popular hayride and campfire on January 21st with over 600 people coming out to enjoy the night, a nice camp fire and hot chocolate! A beautiful moon rose to illuminate the evening.

Raymond Schell went to AZGFD archery program training at Lake Pleasant. The Park hopes to start the program at White Tank once others have had the opportunity to go through the class.

The New Library and Nature Center received the Platinum LEED certification this month! We are all proud of this accomplishment and hope it is an example to other projects in the future.

The new computers for the POS/reservation system were installed this month and the staff, hosts and volunteers are doing their best to become familiar and proficient with the new system.

Vulture Mountain: Planning still continues and we are reviewing development alternatives and working with EPG to look at options.

Coming and Going in Human Resources

The Full-Time Contact Station Assistant position at Lake Pleasant has been filled effective 2/07/11

A 30-year Parks employee, currently at White Tank, has decided to retire effective February 3, 2011

The Department is currently reviewing workload and staffing requirements for Estrella and has reassigned one of the maintenance positions to White Tank effective January 24, 2011

No new postings at this time but the remaining maintenance position at White Tank will be evaluated at a later date.