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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 3, 2008
To: Parks and Recreation Department Commissioners
From: R.J. Cardin, Director 
Re: **Director's Summary of Current Events**

Listed below are issues that the department has been involved with since the August 12, 2008 Director's Summary.

Superintendent Report

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area (SCRCA): The supervisor coordinated and implemented a trip to ASU for park staff & docents to examine the Spur Cross Collection. Numerous digital photos were taken of representative artifacts

The supervisor participated with a number of other individuals in a 3 hr meeting regarding forming a coalition to combat noxious and invasive weeds in the Carefree/Cave Creek area. Tonto National Forest will lead the team. Grant identification and acquisition were identified as desirable first steps.

Usery Mountain Regional Park: In August 15 interpretive programs were performed (revenue month) with a total of 280 heat-hardy participants with 56 visitors being dedicated repeat attendees. Animal Hide and Seek Flashlight Walk was this month's ringer with 80 explorers. Despite the heat the Full Moon glowed on 55 night hikers.

Day-use attendance increased by 45% for August 08 with 7,948 visitors compared to 5,498 visitors last year. Camping use decreased by 37.5% to 244 campers from 391 in Aug 07. Total revenue for August 08 increased by 8% or \$1,018 from August 07. Annual pass sales are producing promising increases with a total of 79 passes sold in the first two months which is 21 more than last year. Staff solicited and received donations for archery targets to save on costs.

A member of the maintenance staff designed and built a small utility cart for trail work from the recycling of a metal protective air conditioning cover and parts from an old golf cart.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park: The strongest summer program was the monthly Mountain Bike by the Moon Light. The August turnout matched the response in July and saw 121 riders come out on the evening of August 23rd. This summer Kachina Rescue has cleaned up a couple of scraped elbows but recorded nothing more serious. September will be the last of five summer night mountain bike rides.

The August program schedule was curtailed due to vacations and an open Interpretive Ranger slot. The Park Supervisor lead a couple of hikes on Lousley Trail. Interpretive Ranger from White Tank lead the Full Moon Hike with 14 and gave a Venomous Critter presentation to park staff.

Summer projects have focused on trail work and repairs to the trails following a strong summer monsoon season.

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An eagle scout project installed 20 location markers on the North Trail which will be used along with a self-guided nature walk on that trail.

The Park received a donation from the Desert Classic Duathlon for just over \$3,700.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park: During the fiscal month of August, we saw an increase in attendance of 82% and a 72% increase in revenue from this time last year.

In August, we offered 7 programs. The most popular event of the month was the Black light Special: Scorpion Scavenger Hunt, which appealed to the likes of 102 intrigued visitors and received front page attention in the East Valley Tribune.

The Park Supervisor worked with Pinal County Public Works to get a park sign installed along the north side of Hunt Highway near Thompson Road. The sign will increase awareness of the park and allow new visitors heading westbound on Hunt Highway to find the park easier.

Thirty eager volunteers from Arizona Project Challenge committed a total of 120 combined hours of volunteer work at the park on a Saturday in August. The cadets cleaned the roadway along Thompson Road and the entrance to the park. They also removed weeds and debris from the memorial and areas around the nature center. In addition, the Project Challenge cadets assisted the park and the Friends of San Tan with several projects in relation to the tortoise habitat.

Desert Outdoor Center (DOC): The DOC held its 10 year anniversary celebration on Friday, August 22. The event was a huge success.

Contract Updates

All Parks: Drink vending concession Request for Proposal (RFP) scheduled to be released September 8th.

Adobe Dam: Preparation continues for vacating of the Aquatic Facility by the current concessionaire and assumption of responsibilities of the new concessionaire effective October 1, 2008.

Lake Pleasant: Marina permitting continues; stop work order remains in place; temporary Certificate of Occupancy still required.

- Materials Management authorized Planning and Development to hire an outside consultant to review plan submission – Tetra Tech, Inc., a firm that has extensive marine engineering experience.
- Latest plan submissions were to be reviewed by Tetra Tech with comments due 8/25/08.
- Violation hearing held by Planning and Development on 8/26/08 pertaining to Scorpion Bay Marina – Hearing Officer took under advisement; expect decision in approximately 2 weeks. Main thrust of hearing was whether County had jurisdiction to cite.

Marketing Updates

On August 26th, interpretive rangers from the Desert Outdoor Center, Utery Mountain, Estrella Mountain and White Tank Mountain Regional Parks were recognized for their hard work and dedication by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors at a National Association of Counties (NACo) Awards ceremony. Programs developed by the rangers which received awards included the Youth and Family Fitness Hikes and Programs (Best in Category and Achievement Award) and Lake Pleasant Camp (Achievement Award).

Coming and Going in Human Resources

The following positions were resigned; Contact Station Assistant at Lake Pleasant effective 7/22/08, the Park Maintenance Supervisor at Lake Pleasant effective 8/20/08 and the Park Office Assistant at White Tanks effective 8/29/08.

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The following positions have been filled; the Park Maintenance Worker position at McDowell Mountain Park effective 9/01/08 and the Administrative Supervisor position at Headquarters effective 9/08/08

Interviews have been held or are being scheduled for the following positions; the Trails Development Supervisor position with the Trails Crew were 9/04/08, the Park Office Assistant position at Cave Creek Park are scheduled for 9/10/08 and 9/11/08, and the two vacant Contact Station Assistant positions at Lake Pleasant and the Park Maintenance Worker position at Lake Pleasant are currently being scheduled.

The vacant Interpretive Ranger position at McDowell Mountain Park was recruited; close date was 9/04/08.