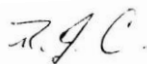




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MEMORANDUM

Date: May 8, 2012
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 April 10, 2012 Director's Summary.

From the Office of the Director
Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

- ***Authorized the Parks and Recreation Department to Submit a Recreation and Public Purpose Lease Application*** – Submitted to the Bureau of Land Management for three parcels of land in the Vulture Mountains Park and Recreation Area
- ***Passed a Resolution to Authorize the Director of the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department to Approve and Submit Applications*** - Applications for funding distributed by the Arizona State Parks Board
- ***Updated Organization Structure*** – (Please see attached)

Budget

General Fund (100) – Agency 300 – On the expenditure side, the General Fund is currently reporting expenditures 9% or \$81,514 under the year to date (YTD) budget. There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305 – The Enhancement Fund is currently reporting revenue at 17% or \$525,368 over the YTD budget. Enhancement Fund is currently 6% or \$186,525 under the YTD operating budget for expenditures.

Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302 – The Lake Fund is currently reporting revenues at 4% or \$63,695 over the YTD budget. The Lake Fund is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 9% or \$135,306.

Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306 – Spur Cross is currently reporting revenues at -8% or \$11,702 under the YTD budget. Spur Cross is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 22% or \$53,134.

Information Technology

Work continued with OET to finish the installation of voice and data lines for the Maintenance Supervisor's Office at Lake Pleasant.

SOLID picked up and tried to complete the installation for VPN use at the DOC, but had problems completing connection. This would allow SOLID to connect with their on-site computer from a remote location.

A meeting was held with select OET staff and Zona Communications at Zona's Administrative office to further review possibly of Admin office move to LP Ops bldg.

The first draft of the Maintenance Module (POS/Reservation System) was completed and a test group of 10 staff members is currently reviewing the new system.

Human Resources

Staffing side, news to note:

- The Department reviewed the current organizational structure and workload of the Administrative Division over the past several months and concluded that a full-time HR Specialist was no longer required (primarily due to ADP Payroll and NEOGOV systems now available). On April 3, the position held by Amelia Sowers was eliminated and Ms. Sowers was referred to the Maricopa County Career Center. She also receives priority placement for any positions she applies for within the County for 6 months.
- The vacant Park Maintenance position at Lake Pleasant was opened for external recruitment for a second time and interviews are scheduled in the upcoming week
- The vacant Lake Pleasant Supervisor position is currently open for recruitment.

Volunteer Program

- Our Volunteer Coordinator assisted at the Department's booth at the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Outdoor Expo on April 1st. It was an awesome event and a great opportunity to hand out information on our regional parks, as well as answer questions about volunteer/host opportunities. The booth was super busy and staff estimate they spoke to a few hundred people.
- The Park Host Exit Survey was sent out via email this year. The survey was done electronically this year (using Survey Monkey) which makes it easier to reply than the paper copies. The hosts can just click a link and fill out the survey on-line on their own time and completely anonymous. All of the results are submitted electronically and compiled in one easy to read report. This saves paper and is a more efficient way to compile survey results.
- The second Staff and Volunteer hike at Estrella was not as well attended as anticipated. April is a busy month with many of our hosts leaving for the summer, so the parks needed staff to work.
- Met with Michelle Lee with the Arizona Republic who wrote a nice article on our volunteers ([Link](#)).

Superintendent Reports

Cave Creek Regional Park - The Park hosted 31 interpretive programs with 369 participants, including 123 repeat attendees. There were also four docent led programs offered with 33 visitors in attendance. Youth & Family programs offered included Polliwogin' Story Time; Ride with the Ranger; Reptile Feeding; Venomous; History of Mexican Cowboy; Birding; and Archery 101. Healthy Life Style programs offered included four fitness hikes; Desert Intro; and Desert Survival.

The Desert Tortoise enclosure is 95% complete with only the rebar and drip system installation left to be completed. This project has involved a lot of back breaking labor by our volunteers from Hands on Greater Phoenix, park staff, park hosts and boy scouts. Piccolo, the Park's Desert Tortoise, has moved into the enclosure while the juvenile tortoise has been relocated to the maintenance compound closure.

As the season winds down all but one Park Host couple has left for the season and park visitation has started to slow down.

Desert Outdoor Center – The calendar for the FY12-13 school year is already half booked as many schools are reserving early to ensure a field trip date. The DOC supervisor met with the Salt River Project Invasive Species Coordinator to develop a class on invasive species, in particular the quagga mussel.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: The Park hosted 37 programs with 1,321 people in attendance.

Lake Pleasant held its 8th Annual Dam Good Run/Walk Hike event which allowed participants the once a year opportunity to cross over the Waddell Dam. The next day the 11th Annual Lake Pleasant Easter Egg Hunt drew a large number of families.

The archery program is a big success with the last three sessions completely full.

The Lake hosted the 3rd Annual Paddle Fest with over 600 visitors in attendance. Each year this event continues to grow and the Pleasant Paddlers Program adds many new paddlers who enjoy the day on the water.

The Park Ranger offered 2 Desert Awareness presentations during the Maricopa County Safety Fair.

The stargazing program brought 350 people to the park to enjoy an evening under the stars.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park – The Park hosted 16 interpretive programs and hikes for families and youth with 120 visitors in attendance.

April was a busy month at Estrella with the ramadas filled on the weekends from group reservations. Easter had a strong showing with a crowd of over 5,500 people enjoying family picnics and gatherings in the beautiful weather.

The Three Rivers Historical Society has been partnering with the Park on the Centennial Trail project. The Park Supervisor meets with the group twice per month to maintain the momentum gained after the Centennial Celebration and Trail Dedication.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park – The Park offered 31 interpretive programs with over 400 park visitors in attendance.

April was a month of transition for the campground. On April 1st 80% of the campsites were full compared to April 30th when only 8 campsites were occupied.

Budget figures confirmed the first 9 months of the 2011-2012 fiscal year were the busiest in McDowell's history with overall revenue figures up \$100,000 or just over 20% over the previous fiscal year.

The Mountain Division of Maricopa County Sheriff's Office conducted a special enforcement effort to check fee compliance and off trail activity in the northwest corner of the park. During a 5 hour period, 67 park users were checked and only one visitor had not paid the appropriate entry fee and was cited.

The Park Supervisor and Park Planner attended 2 public meetings conducted for public input on trails in the northern sections of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. This area of the Preserve will determine the route of the Maricopa Trail through the Preserve and where it will connect with McDowell Mountain Regional Park.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park – The Park offered 18 programs to the delight of 888 participants. The highlights of the month included the Full Moon Hike; Meteor Shower Hike; Indoor Movie Days; Horse Talk with the Doc (special guest speaker, Dr. Christiansen); and our popular home school programs which included Exploring Space; and Ancients of San Tan.

The San Tan Park staff along with the Friends of San Tan Mountain Regional Park, hosted a special Scrambled Eggstravaganza event on Saturday, April 7. Despite the warmer weather, the event attracted

175 eager participants. Families enjoyed crafts, coloring, games, face painting, a scavenger hunt and an EGGstra special egg hunt. This program was highlighted as part of the Wet-N-Wild Promotion, and a few lucky individuals were able to receive passes for finding golden eggs.

The San Tan Interpretive Ranger was a special guest speaker and assisted the Arizona Game & Fish Department's Outdoor Archery Expo, which was well received by the 600 event attendees.

The San Tan Interpretive Ranger conducted an outreach at Skyline Elementary for 70 kindergarteners teaching the youth about the beauty of the park and letting the children see our snakes up close and personal. San Tan also made contacts with 325 youth and families at the Centennial Science Fair. The Park was given a free booth to showcase our wildlife display animals.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office conducted a successful enforcement day at San Tan. Both mounted patrol and foot patrol deputies were placed in strategic areas around the park to help with rule enforcement (i.e.: staying on designated trails, fee collection, properly entering the park/fence cuts and other important issues the park deals with on a regular basis) and user education.

Usery Mountain Regional Park – The Park presented 82 interpretive programs, yoga classes, and outreaches in the April with 1,493 participants and 612 repeat attendees. Some of the month's most popular programs were Stargazing; the Full Moon Hike; and the Animal Flashlight Walk. Children programs were also well received and they included Critter Scene Investigation; Kids G.R.E.E.N; Desert Scavenger Hunt; Story Time; Lizard Hunt; Outdoor Games; and Animal Flashlight Walk.

The Park's new dog fitness programs for beginners and advanced dog owners has been growing in popularity and this month 21 dogs and owners enjoyed the event.

The popular home school program this April featured the interpretive ranger partnering with the Arizona Science Center teaching families all about the scientific method during "What Will Happen If...".

Archery 101, the archery class taught by the interpretive ranger and maintenance staff, continues to be popular with 33 students in April. Archery 202 provided 13 graduates of 101 with advanced instruction.

The archery range in partnership with the Usery Mountain Archery Club has hosted a number of archery tournaments every month. April had three shoots with 125 shooters for 2 championship field tournaments and one 3D shoot.

The Park Supervisor and maintenance team installed a memorial bench on the Blevins Trail southwest of Area 10. Before the morning was over, park visitors were already enjoying the new bench. Another memorial bench will be installed soon on the Wind Cave Trail near the boundary of the Tonto National Forest.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park – Easter once again was the busiest day of the year at the Park. Picnickers assembled at most of the tables to enjoy the holiday and an interesting trend was noted – there is a higher volume of ramada rentals on the Saturday before Easter.

The Park had many completed and in process projects including the rerouting of the first few hundred yards of Ford Canyon Trail; Hands On Phoenix volunteers worked hard wheel barreling dirt to the Black Rock Long Loop improving 25-30' of trail, making it much easier to walk and enjoy the trail. The contractors have begun work at the Family Campground as part of the electrical upgrades scheduled for this Summer and the construction crew is also digging a trench for the electricity for the new hosts sites at the Maricopa trailhead. Once completed all 40 campground sites will have electricity for campers to plug in their RV's, better serving our visitors and extending the season.

Contract Update

Commercial Management Concessions Agreement with Blue Mule Outfitters, LLC – A fishing guide service at Lake Pleasant Regional Park

Commercial Management Concessions Agreement with Phoenix Scuba, Inc. – Management and operation of a scuba concession at Lake Pleasant Regional Park

Commercial Management Concessions Agreement with Super Shine Mobile Detailing, Inc. – Management, operation, and maintenance of a mobile boat, truck and recreational vehicle detailing concession

Arena Management Agreement, Estrella Mountain Regional Park - The Board of Supervisors approved an Arena Management Agreement with Northside Horse Outfitters for the management, operation and maintenance of the arena complex at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. With this Agreement usage of the complex will increase through events sponsored/managed by the Manager. Events being considered include, but are not limited to, equestrian events, cook-outs, western-theme events, holiday-theme events, concerts and community-service events, i.e. 4-H events.

Tres Rios Golf Course, Estrella Mountain Regional Park - The Board of Supervisors approved the Assignment of Tres Rios Golf Course from Textron Financial Corporation and SPE GO Holdings, Inc. to Tres Rios Golf, LLC. All terms and conditions of the Agreement remain unchanged. The term of the Agreement is through April 30, 2037 with no renewal options remaining. There is no financial impact to the County.

Invitation to Negotiate, Lake Pleasant Commercial Development - The Department released an Invitation to Negotiate on April 16, 2012 to solicit proposals for the development, operation, management and maintenance of a resort complex to be located in either Area 2 or 3 of Lake Pleasant Regional Park and commercial development, i.e. convenience store and other recreational amenities/opportunities in an area currently outside of the Park. The mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference was held on May 3 2012; Proposals are due Parks on June 21, 2012.