

MEMORANDUM

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Date: January 12, 2023
To: Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
From: R.J. Cardin, Director
Re: Director's Summary of Current Events

Listed below are activities the department has been involved with during **November and December 2022.**

Spur Cross Conservation Area:

In partnership with the Town of Cave Creek and Desert Foothills Land Trust, Maricopa County purchased 29.9 acres of property adjacent to and surround on three sides by the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. This property sits atop a prominent hill overlooking the entrance to Spur Cross. The property also has an access easement associated with it that allows the owner to access the property by motor vehicle through the main pedestrian entrance to the Conservation Area. Acquisition of this property allows an important viewshed to be maintained and the access easement to be extinguished. Escrow closed on December 30, 2022.

Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

Date/ Status	Tracking Number	Summary
11/16/2022 Approved	C-74-23-003-X-00	Transfer Vehicle from Parks to Equipment Services Department: A) The Transfer of vehicle M1209 2012 Kubota RTV500 from the Parks Department to the Equipment Services Department. A one-time Non-Recurring Transfer of \$8,000 from the Equipment Services to the Parks Enhancement Fund. With no reduction to Parks & Recreation, vehicle M1209 was replaced by 80122. This transfer eliminates sending to auction and using the remaining life expectancy in another County department.
11/16/2022 Approved	C-30-04-027-1-07	Amendment to Use Management Agreement with Junior National Foundation: Approve Amendment Six to the Use Management Agreement with Junior National Foundation. The purpose of Amendment Six is to address, among other things, the improvement and expansion of the existing Tres Rios Golf Course. The term of the agreement is through December 31, 2050, with one option to renew for twenty-five (25) years.
11/16/2022 Approved	C30-23-013-X-00	Amendment to Estrella Mountain Regional Park Master Plan to Add 18-Hole Golf Course and Modifications to Multiple Use Trails: Approve an Amendment to the Estrella Park Master Plan for expansion to the existing Tres Rios Golf facility. The expansion will include a Junior National 18-hole golf course and new clubhouse, which requires re-routing specific sections of existing multiple-use trails at Estrella Park. The reroutes will not decrease the approximate 43 miles of trails in the park. At its meeting on November 15, 2022, the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission voted to recommend that the Board approve this Amendment to the Master Plan.
11/16/2022 Approved	C-30-13-004-3-01	Amendment to License Agreement for Use of Real Property at Usery Mountain Regional Park: Approve Amendment 1 to the License Agreement for Use of Real Property with the Flood Control District. Amendment One shall be effective retroactive as of July 31, 2022.
11/16/2022 Approved	C-30-23-012-X-00	Purchase Agreement and Escrow Instructions: Approve and execute a Purchase Agreement and Escrow Instructions (PSA) between Maricopa County, the Town of Cave Creek (Town), and Desert Foothills Land Trust, Inc. (DFLT) for the purchase of 29.9 acres of real property from DFLT. The County

		and the Town will contribute equal refundable Purchase Deposit in the amount of \$362,500 each into a non-interest-bearing account with an escrow agent. Upon the close of escrow, funds will be made available to DFLT only for the purchase of the properties. The County and the Town, upon obtaining title to the Properties from DFLT, shall record a Conservation Easement on the properties in favor of DFLT.
11/16/2022 Approved	C-30-23-014-X-00	Distribution Design and Construction Contract with SRP for San Tan Mountain Regional Park: Approve a Design and Construction Contract with Salt River Project Agricultural and Improvement District (SRP) in order to provide electrical distribution design and construction for the Goldmine Trailhead at San Tan Park. The cost of providing the electrical design and construction is \$11,484.12.
11/16/2022 Approved	C-30-23-345-X-00	Donations for Parks and Recreation: In accordance with County Policy A2508, accept the monthly donation report received from Parks and Recreation for October 2022, for Cash Value of \$1,306.83.
12/7/2022 Approved	C-06-23-386-X-00	Reappointment to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission: Approve the reappointment of John Crane to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission representing Supervisory District 2. The term of service will be effective as of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024.
12/7/2022 Approved	C-30-23-018-X-00	IGA with AZ Department of Forestry and Fire Management relating to Parks: Approve IGA for the management of the reduction of wildfire risk and/or mitigation, watershed improvement, native biodiversity, and educational programs. The term of this agreement is 5 years and may be renewed for two additional 5-year terms.

Administration Division

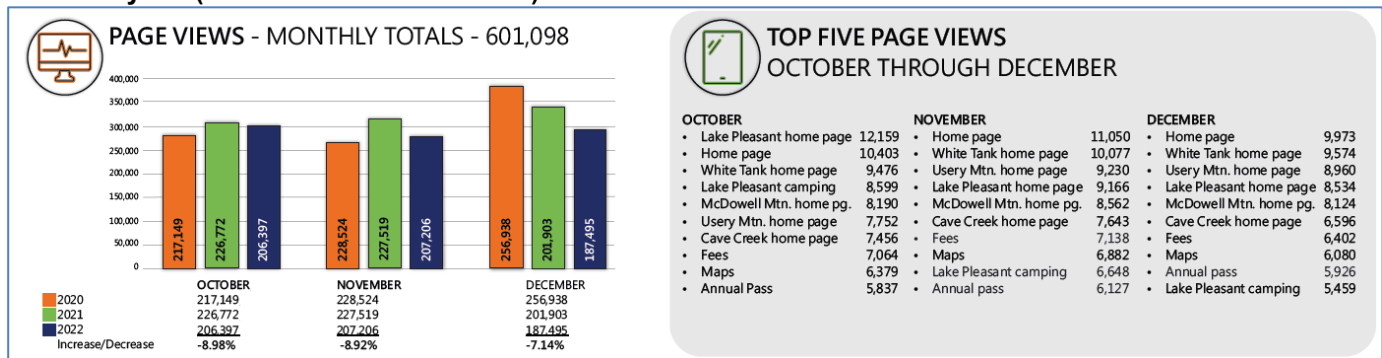
Parks Visitor Attendance Report (FY23 through December 2022): Page 9

Volunteer Hours (FY23 through December 2022):

TOTAL Volunteer Hours, by month								Year End %
	July	August	September	October	November	December	YTD Total	Change
FY23 - All Hours	3,927	4,399	4,844	7,201	10,898	12,187	43,456	1%
FY22 - All Hours	3,268	3,362	4,038	8,069	11,154	13,295	43,186	3%
FY21 - All Hours	2,800	2,738	2,699	8,598	11,094	11,790	39,719	6%
Financial Impact of Volunteers, by Month								Hourly Rate
	July	August	September	October	November	December	YTD Total	
FY23 Financial Impact	\$117,614	\$131,750	\$145,078	\$215,670	\$326,395	\$365,001	\$1,301,507	\$29.95
FY22 Financial Impact	\$93,269	\$95,951	\$115,245	\$230,289	\$318,335	\$379,439	\$1,232,528	\$28.54
FY21 Financial Impact	\$71,204	\$69,627	\$68,636	\$218,647	\$282,120	\$299,820	\$710,234	\$27.20

Special Days of Service event listings:	Date	Attendance	Hours	
+	Lake Pleasant - Clean-Up	9/6/2022	15	60
	Usery - Trail Maintenance	9/8/2022	8	22
	Cave Creek - Native Seed Garden	9/8/2022	1	2
	Lake Pleasant - Clean-Up	9/10/2022	234	936
	Usery - Clean-Up	9/17/2022	4	12
	Usery - Desert Defenders	9/24/2022	11	33
	DOC - Clean-Up	9/24/2022	3	9
	Lake Pleasant - Clean-Up	9/24/2022	11	33
	Cave Creek - Native Seed Garden	9/27/2022	7	27
	Cave Creek - Painting	10/1/2022	1	3
	Estrella - Tree Planting	11/4/2022	12	30
	Estrella - Tree Planting	11/5/2022	14	28
	Lake Pleasant - USAA Clean-Up	11/15/2022	8	16
	White Tank - Adopt-a-Trail	11/17/2022	4	5
	McDowell - Adopt-a-Trail	11/18/2022	8	24
	Usery - Clean-Up	11/19/2022	6	18
	Lake Pleasant - Clean-Up	12/10/2022	46	138
	McDowell - Trail Maintenance	12/17/2022	14	47
	Cave Creek - Trail Maintenance	12/26/2022	5	16
	Usery - Clean-Up	12/29/2022	30	61

Web Analytics (October – December 2022):



Park Operations Division

Natural Resources

- The Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) worked with the Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM), to approve an IGA that will allow the DFFM to assist the parks in developing fuel reduction plans and implementing these plans at several extremely high and high wildfire threat areas-within the parks.
- The NRS worked with our partners at the DFFM and the Lower Gila River Coordination Team to begin the permit process for a Riparian Habitat Enhancement at Estrella Mountain Regional Park-Gila River Project. Currently working with the U.S. Army Core of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on permits that will include the removal/treatment of 100 acres of salt cedar, replacing with native trees and shrubs to improve the native biodiversity in that area. This project will be implemented by DFFM and funded by the Non-native Vegetation Species Eradication Fund, plus Flood Controls tall pots-trees.
- The NRS has been working with the Arizona Master Naturalists Association-MC Chapter to complete the 2023 Annual Park Plan, which guides the volunteer's work priorities for the natural resources to be completed within the parks for the upcoming year.

Project Management:

- Lake Pleasant:
 - Continued work on the Overlook Pump Station project.
 - Completed Discovery Center roof replacement and interior water damage repairs.
- McDowell:
 - Began work on the Pump Station Replacement project.
 - Reviewed submitted proposals for Bike Park design.
- Bid Documents:
 - Estrella and Cave Creek campground designs
 - White Tank Competitive Track and Horse Staging Trailhead designs
- CIP: Reviewed proposed FY24 capital improvement projects.

Trades

- System:
 - Electrical - Repaired six (6) electrical pedestal issues at various parks (three bad breakers, two bad electrical plugs, and one grounding issue).
 - Septic - Repaired septic line issues/clogs at Hassayampa, Cave Creek, McDowell, and Lake Pleasant.
 - Water heaters - Replaced three (3) water heaters.
 - HVAC - McDowell Visitor Center repaired.
 - Located underground utilities for 13 locator tickets.
- Lake Pleasant:
 - Completed the repair of the broken main domestic water line in the group area.
 - Starting valve exercising program.
- Estrella:
 - Continued work on the pollinator garden/turf reduction project.
- Usery
 - Completed the floor repair for the plumbing issues at Usery park RR # 4 and Group A/B.

Trails

- Usery:
 - Completing reconstruction on the Merkle Trail by HMI.
 - Talon Trail construction finished (>2 miles of new trail constructed).
 - Gates and Iron Ranger installed at the Northern end of Talon Trail.
- McDowell:
 - ACE crews began their first two hitches (of five) on the trails.
- Estrella:
 - Inspected several vandal routes and breached fence lines.
- White Tank:
 - Inspected Black Rock Loop for reported damage.
- Maricopa Trail:
 - Responded to several reports of vandalism and damage to Segment 11 at Sun Valley Trailhead (removing nearly six bags of trash from the parking lot).
 - Inspected Segment 14 before the race from Lake Pleasant to Cave Creek and found several RV's parked on the trail and requested owners to move.
 - Found a burned-out RV and trailer on the trail, and after a few calls to sheriffs and police, we were put into contact with State Trust Land, which eventually came out and removed the RV and trailer.
 - Inspected MT segment 11 and Sun Valley Trailhead, removed trash, and cleaned up the parking lot prior to the holidays.
- The Flood Control District installed cement barriers blocking off two access points along both sides of Sun Valley Parkway just west of the McMicken Dam near the Maricopa Trail trailhead. Additional signage was also installed in an attempt to prevent unauthorized vehicular access in the area.



Cave Creek Regional Park

- Special Events:
 - November - *Captain Cosom's Crazy Challenge Bike Race* with 126 participants. The race started in the Town of Cave Creek, proceeded to Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, and then to Cave Creek Park. They utilized several trails in the park, exiting the park through the Flume Trail and riding back to the Town of Cave Creek.
 - December - *Cave Creek Thriller & Thrasher Run*, a partnership event with Aravaipa. This running event features 50K, 24K, 11K, & 5K in the morning and 30K, 20K, 10K, and 5K at night. It was a successful event, with 385 attendees overall.
 - Weddings in the Amphitheater were on Nov 5th and 12th.
- Maintenance:
 - Staff refurbished the Amphitheater by re-staining the facility.
 - Probation Workers - In November, two probationers worked 19 hours completing various landscaping tasks. In December, three probationers completed 25 hours of community service.

Desert Outdoor Center

- Park Programs:
 - 52 park programs were held in November, with some highlights being stargazing, venomous creatures, petroglyph hike, and many other trail hikes.
- Center Programs:
 - There were 15 school field trips, offering 54 programs to 1,259 students, teachers, and chaperones.
- Special Events:
 - Two weddings and a week-long church retreat were held, bringing 237 non-educational visitors.
- Training:
 - Rangers and Education Supervisor met with PIO Dawna Taylor on 11/9 to discuss marketing programs, social media usage, and interactions with media.
 - Ranger Eric hosted a park training on 11/16 for the other interpretive rangers to become more familiar with the Hassayampa River Preserve.
 - Rangers also reviewed the basics of using nature apps such as iNaturalist to support our department's conservation programs.

Hassayampa River Preserve

- Projects:
 - The 30% draft of the Visitor Center Exhibit Master Plan was received with comments.
 - The Nature Conservancy completed its annual conservation easement monitoring.
- Maintenance:
 - An arborist service removed the large fallen cottonwood from the Palm Lake trail.
 - Staff and volunteers continue to repair fences damaged during monsoon season due to cattle trespass or ATV trespass.
- Natural Resources:



Lake Pleasant Regional Park

- Special Events:
 - On November 6th, the Tri-Family Triathlon with 150 participants.
- Volunteer Events:
 - USAA Clean-Up Event had 20 volunteers.
 - Pinzon Family Shoreline Litter Pick-Up was with five volunteers.
 - Ocean Conservancy and American Express Shoreline Litter Pick-up Event had 100 volunteers.
 - Darza Family Shoreline Litter Pick-Up, five participants.
- Projects:
 - Entry Booth Renovations began on December 12, 2022.
- Operations:
 - The annual Agua Fria River eagle closure is in place, effective December 15, 2022 - June 15, 2023.
 - On December 19, 2022, the Discovery Center opened daily - averaging 100+ visitors daily during the holiday weeks.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- Operations:
 - For the visiting public, a new QR code was posted around the park for guests to scan to view events.
 - New maps were placed in the kiosks at Dixie Mine & Rio Verde trailheads.
- Maintenance:
 - Replaced a water heater, repaired a shower, and replaced a restroom door lock, among other projects. Three septic tanks were recently pumped, and the problematic obstructions were cleared.
 - The front gate malfunctioned due to mice chewing the sensor wire and was repaired.
 - Roof and duct repairs at Nature Center were completed.
- Special Events:
 - November -
 - Ragnar Running Race had 3,000 attendees and many spectators.
 - *Lead, Follow or Get Out Of My Way* had 100 equestrians riding in the park.
 - *12 Hours of Fury* saw 300 attendees.
 - Western Spirit Cycling & REI had several guided mountain biking tours.
 - December -
 - *McDowell Mountain Frenzy* had 700 participants.
 - *Dawn to Dusk* also had 700 participants.
 - *Mountain 2 Fountain* hosted 150 participants.
- Medical emergencies:
 - Park hosts and staff assisted a camper who crashed their bike in the park. Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) and Emergency Medical Services were quickly on the scene, and the camper was airlifted out of the campground to a local hospital. The camper is now recovering from their injuries.
 - Park hosts helped a local family and MCSO locate a missing adult son who wandered into the Park and was suffering from a mental health crisis. With their efforts, the person was quickly located on the main park road and returned home.
- Damage:
 - A hit-and-run on the park exit gate caused it to become inoperable. The incident was reported to MCSO, and a RISK claim was filed. Staff is working on estimates for replacement.
- Trails:
 - Repairs - Pemberton Trail & Long Loop.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park

- Volunteer Events:
 - Twelve San Tan Sheddars Mountain Bike group volunteers completed 1.5 miles of trail maintenance on the San Tan Trail on Saturday, December 10th.
- Special Events:
 - 2022 *Xterra Trail* race on November 13th with 178 racers featuring 22K, 41K, 8K, and 5K.
 - Annual Equine Trails Sports skills event (a 5-mile route) in mid-December for 30 participants.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

- Damage:
 - A series of car break-ins occurred in several parking areas on 11/28. MCSO was notified and will increase their patrols and surveillance of these areas. A sign notifying visitors not to leave valuables in their vehicles will also be posted in both locations.
- Volunteer Events:
 - Two new Trail Ambassadors have started roaming the trail system, providing assistance and/or information to park visitors and reporting any issues/concerns.
 - On 11/17, the Spur Cross trail volunteers were loaned out to the Desert Foothills Land Trust to trim and rake the Jewel of the Creek loop trail in preparation for their Desert Discovery Day event on 11/19.
- Special Events:
 - *C4 Mountain Bike Race* took place on November 12th with 126 participants.
- Park Programs:
 - The park supervisor provided interpretive hikes to the following groups in November:
 - REI Trail Guides on 11/3
 - Desert Botanical Garden Horticulture Aides on 11/4
 - Arizona State Historical Preservation Office Site Stewards on 11/13

- Natural Resources:
 - A National Park Service work crew specializing in invasive species control returned to Spur Cross from December 6 – 12. They applied pre- and post-emergent herbicides along Spur Cross and Dragonfly Trails sections.
 - Spur Cross received 1.58 inches of precipitation for December. The total rainfall for the year is exactly 10 inches, about 1 inch below the yearly average, with 6.1 inches of rain that fell during the monsoon season this year.
 - The Audubon Christmas Bird Count took place on Friday, December 30. A total of 36 species of birds were documented.
- Operations:
 - The Host Entry Station will now be staffed seven days per week effective December 1st through Spring 2023.
 - Spur Cross Trail Volunteers continue to work on Thursday mornings, primarily working on trail maintenance.

Usery Mountain Regional Park

- Special Events:
 - In November, Aravaipa Running held their annual *Punisher Night Run* and *Tonto Mountain Bike* event with approximately 600 people participating.
 - In December, the archery club held an event for 60 shooters.
- Media:
 - *Visit Mesa* filmed a Good Morning Arizona CH3 TV segment about their passport program for visiting highlights of Mesa, where Usery Park is a destination.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park

- Projects:
 - Entry roadway construction is on track to be completed on December 24th.
- Volunteer Event:
 - The annual Friends of White Tank volunteer group held their annual meetings at White Tank Nature Center on November 19th with a great turnout and ready to progress after a discussion of the needs of White Tank Mountain Regional Park.
 - On November 17, Thread-Up hosted a Black Rock Clean-Up, an adopt-a-trail clean-up, and several trail repairs.

**Maricopa County Parks Visitor Report
 FY23, through December 2022**

	FY23	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Cave Creek		1,373	2,019	2,541	8,490	13,383	13,382						
	FY22	1,381	1,198	2,515	6,747	7,873	15,242	13,502	13,094	18,600	13,639	3,764	2,737
	FY21	1,122	911	1,325	4,688	12,084	12,121	7,593	10,523	16,939	8,367	4,046	3,136
	FY20	363	505	959	4,233	9,450	9,775	13,542	14,572	16,079	11,336	3,145	1,552
Estrella Park		2,342	2,644	3,346	6,640	8,380	7,946						
	FY22	1,184	1,278	2,605	5,891	7,398	12,222	14,310	12,180	15,092	13,180	4,560	3,519
	FY21	2,571	3,317	4,696	8,333	12,723	8,483	16,806	11,991	15,489	7,869	4,770	2,371
	FY20	1,350	1,954	3,571	6,034	9,547	6,841	12,726	11,067	16,449	9,370	5,819	3,687
McDowell Mtn		1,685	1,845	3,792	13,822	17,421	17,226						
	FY22	964	1,310	2,032	7,745	8,208	15,958	15,560	15,706	18,281	17,854	5,163	1,886
	FY21	2,667	2,275	3,806	10,302	16,229	17,207	18,219	13,673	15,294	8,218	4,374	2,058
	FY20	1,095	1,407	3,520	11,570	12,574	13,877	17,846	16,006	18,997	13,822	5,654	2,779
San Tan Park		4,215	6,029	7,407	14,861	23,586	20,889						
	FY22	3,753	4,506	4,105	9,045	18,584	21,434	30,452	26,402	29,732	13,033	7,574	4,506
	FY21	8,080	7,029	11,102	16,676	27,144	20,844	36,069	34,131	30,333	14,658	10,262	5,752
	FY20	3,941	3,832	6,009	12,801	17,839	16,810	27,717	25,062	33,803	26,313	17,551	9,622
Spur Cross		180	316	488	1,976	4,789	3,580						
	FY22	299	395	500	1,484	2,859	4,031	7,069	8,168	5,818	4,352	1,211	494
	FY21	171	121	354	1,984	3,826	5,218	6,273	4,695	7,886	4,093	1,318	620
	FY20	113	122	244	730	826	4,208	4,592	4,569	4,508	2,276	563	210
Usery Mtn Park		6,500	6,544	7,043	16,896	26,795	24,857						
	FY22	3,926	2,811	5,039	14,212	16,450	38,086	29,834	30,249	34,433	22,465	9,316	5,949
	FY21	5,981	7,587	9,683	18,705	33,071	28,940	41,117	31,167	31,289	15,370	9,282	5,111
	FY20	5,562	5,959	8,133	16,411	26,374	23,339	34,431	33,957	44,356	25,954	12,914	8,453
White Tank		7,264	8,839	9,345	20,458	27,467	26,240						
	FY22	4,923	4,068	5,201	17,768	20,775	42,163	36,298	35,679	40,771	24,697	11,293	6,807
	FY21	8,801	7,667	11,991	20,736	31,836	34,425	42,320	36,939	37,285	17,217	13,590	6,415
	FY20	4,913	5,658	9,810	20,115	31,195	27,762	39,931	40,494	64,224	27,038	16,680	10,640
Hassayampa		463	546	671	1,202	1,500	912						
	FY22	286	333	423	1,105	2,669	1,790	1,771	2,096	2,850	2,286	1,338	554
	FY21	855	632	840	1,681	1,984	1,204	2,014	1,786	2,363	1,672	1,513	555
	FY20	453	418	591	1,405	1,498	971	1,746	2,002	2,321	2,477	2,072	1,294
Lake Pleasant		146,746	87,454	95,065	78,657	56,997	48,957						
	FY22	88,853	62,651	64,323	50,169	38,347	45,239	35,415	44,353	90,764	152,545	147,980	137,694
	FY21	101,160	96,366	79,426	58,720	40,177	22,387	27,877	25,987	42,967	59,969	91,403	76,394
	FY20	90,616	63,458	51,411	37,125	31,095	18,054	32,436	40,902	69,504	75,153	116,342	98,916
DOC		183	225	151	639	186	1,302						
	FY22	0	0	0	0	43	0	84	1,178	1,160	2,276	2,071	506
	FY21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FY20	140	64	381	1,556	1,887	1,330	1,622	1,630	1,030	0	0	0
Agua Fria			113	0	20	92	32						
System Total		170,951	116,574	129,849	163,661	180,596	165,323	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FY22	105,569	78,550	86,743	114,166	123,206	196,165	184,295	189,105	257,501	266,327	194,270	164,652
	FY21	131,408	125,905	123,223	141,825	179,074	150,829	198,288	170,892	199,845	137,433	140,558	102,412
	FY20	108,546	83,377	84,629	111,980	142,285	122,967	186,589	190,261	271,271	193,739	180,740	137,153