



Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department

MEMORANDUM

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Date: March 11, 2020
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 **January and February 2020**.

- BLM Recreational Shooting Sports Project:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Phoenix District has published a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Decision Record approving the Recreational Shooting Sports Project, clearing the way for the construction and operation of five recreational shooting sites to be built on public lands near the Phoenix metro area. According to the published record, "the sites will provide active management, enhanced access and increased safety for shooting sports enthusiasts and other public land users near one of the most populated metro areas in the nation." No detailed information is available at this time that describes the active management or safety practices that will be employed. Two of these sites, including Baldy Mountain, are relatively close to Lake Pleasant Regional Park and shooting noise may impact the visitor experience at the park. The Narramore Rd site is in Arlington AZ, several miles due west of the General Joe Foss Shooting Ranger at Buckeye Hills Regional Park. Both the noise and proximity to existing Parks were department concerns brought to the attention of the BLM during both the scoping and public comment process. The BLM stated the projects will not change existing dispersed recreational shooting access, with approximately 97 percent of BLM-managed public lands in Arizona remaining open to shooting sports.
- Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan - Vision 2030:** The Parks and Recreation Director, Parks Planning and Development Manager, and DIG Studio have been finalizing the agenda for the Parks Vision 2030 Steering Committee to be held April 2, 2020, at the City of Phoenix North Mountain Visitor Center facility.

Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

Date/Status	Tracking Number	Summary
1/29/2020	C-30-19-014-M-01	Amendment to Contract for Design, Construction, Use and Maintenance of a Dock and Boathouses: Approved the changed scope of the work by adding 8' of length to 2 boathouses to accommodate the County's 2 navigational-aid boats. The change in the scope resulted in increased construction costs of \$19,480.07.
1/29/2020 Approved	C-30-20-008-D-00	Donations for Parks: Accept the restricted monetary donations of \$1,000 for memorial benches from Loretta Spielvogel to be placed within McDowell Park; from the family of Joyce A Cooley to be placed within White Tank Park; from Don Heiman to be placed within Userly Park; from Darl Haagen to be placed within Estrella Park; Lucy White to be placed within San Tan Park, and; \$2,000 from the Ocean Conservancy to be used for shoreline clean-up supplies within Lake Pleasant Regional Park.
2/12/2020 Approved	C-06-20-384-7-00	Donation Report for December 2019 and January 2020: Cash value of \$1,915.15.
2/26/2020 Approved	C-06-20-392-7-00	Appointment to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission: Approve the appointment of Shelby Scharbach to the Parks Advisory Commission, representing Supervisorial District 1. The term of the appointment will be effective February 26, 2020, through December 31, 2021.

Administration

Contract Administration:

- **Sponsorship and Partnering Program:** On February 1, 2018, an invitation to negotiate (ITN) was issued by the County to assist Parks with the ongoing challenges of developing new programs and expanding existing park and recreation programs, opportunities and initiatives that improve the quality of life for park visitors and provide responsible stewardship of our natural and cultural resources. By sharing resources and using our Parks, the County and the Partner(s), will be able to achieve strong, comprehensive opportunities to utilize parks in the way that best meets the needs of the recreating public and benefits our Partner(s). This solicitation will continue to be open until February 1, 2021. During the last two years, staff has worked with other County departments to create a Joint Program Marketing Agreement. To date, we have two successful respondents, Recreational Equipment Inc (REI) and Aravaipa Running. The REI negotiations have been finalized and the Agreement is on the March 25 Board of Supervisor's agenda for approval. Parks is still negotiating with Aravaipa.
- **McDowell – Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center (SWCC).** The final draft of the Use Management Agreement with SWCC (respondent to the Letter of Interest (LOI) for the new native wildlife rescue conservation and nature center) has been sent to SWCC for review and execution. We are anticipating this item to be on the April 8 Board of Supervisor's agenda.
- **Adobe –**
 Special Use Permits Issued -
 - March 16-22: Sahuaro Railroad Preservation Society/Maricopa Live Steamers 14th Annual Spring Meet
 - March 28: Phoenix Kart Racing Association – Arizona Drag Racers Reunion – Hall of Fame Induction Car Show, Karting Expo and Swap Meet
 - April 3-5: Sahuaro Railroad Preservation Society/Maricopa Live Steamers Boy Scouts Webelos Crossover (where Club Scouts become Boy Scouts)
 - May 24: Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Phoenix – Fireworks Memorial Day
 - July 3-4: Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Phoenix – Fireworks Independence Day
 - September 6: Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Phoenix – Fireworks Labor Day

Human Resources:

- **Welcome New Employees:**
 - Kenneth Dodson, Contact Station Assistant, Usery – 1/14/2020
 - Robert Berry, Trails Specialist, Trails – 1/27/2020

Volunteer Hours (YTD through February 2020):

TOTAL Volunteer Hours, by month	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	YTD Total	YTD Change	Year End Total	Year End %
FY20 - All Hours	1900.47	1954.5	3883.52	7019.73	10497.32	12463.36	12710.63	12212.71	0	0	0	0	62642.24	10.82%		
FY19 - All Hours	2754	2834	2968	4873	9230	10390	10847	13141	12575.25	7832.35	0	0	56527	-19.46%	76934.6	-22.6%
FY18 - All Hours	3506	4936	4915	6682	11841	12353	13804	12148	13250	8708	3813	3422	70185		99378	
FY20 - Core Volunteers	1669.42	1739.25	2254.62	6239.13	9825.07	11534.94	11440.13	10949.16	0	0	0	0	5663.29		55651.72	34.9%
FY19 - Core Volunteers	2625	2763	2827	4277	9172	10286	10601	13098	12384	7023.97	0	0	8215		75056.97	
FY20 - Service Volunteer Hours	231.05	215.25	1628.9	780.6	672.25	928.42	1270.5	1268.55	0	0	0	0	2075.2		6990.52	-72.7%
FY19 - Service Volunteer Hours	129	61	141	96	59	104	246	43	221.25	808.38	0	0	331		1908.63	

Financial Impact of Volunteers, by Month	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	YTD Total	% Change
FY20 Financial Impact	\$48,329	\$49,703	\$98,758	\$178,512	\$266,947	\$316,943	\$323,231	\$310,569	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,592,992	14%
FY19 Financial Impact	\$67,996	\$69,725	\$73,280	\$107,969	\$227,889	\$256,529	\$267,812	\$324,451	\$310,483	\$193,381	\$0	\$0	\$1,395,652	-18%
FY18 Financial Impact	\$84,635	\$119,155	\$118,648	\$161,303	\$285,842	\$298,201	\$333,229	\$293,253	\$319,855	\$210,211	\$92,046	\$82,607	\$1,694,266	

25.43 FY20 Volunteer Hourly Rate
 24.69 FY19 Volunteer Hourly Rate
 24.14 FY18 Volunteer Hourly Rate

Planning and Development Division

Project Management

- The Vulture Mountain Recreation Area project plans are under review at the Army Core of Engineers for the alternative design analysis for Waters of the USA impacts. EPS Group, MCDOT (Maricopa County Department of Transportation), and their environmental consultant created the alternative design for the individual permit for the project. Staff are reviewing 100% project design documents over the next couple of weeks for final comments on park amenity design.
- Three new filtered and chilled drinking fountains were installed along the walkway and playground at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. The fountains have a bottle filler dispenser, a regular drinking fountain, and a doggie bowl.

- A new electrical service is being installed at the Hassayampa River Preserve. As part of a multi-year preserve improvement plan, the overhead power lines to the visitor's center are being routed underground and new service feeds are being installed under the road to the maintenance building. The new service also supplies additional power for any future needs that arise.
- The new roof project at Hassayampa River Preserve begins this month. The project replaces the metal roof panels and underlayment as well as installs new flashing, trim, and rain gutters. This project replaces the existing roof previously installed by volunteers and installs the correct components to seal the building.

Trades Crew

- Department electricians installed the new bollard walkway lighting at the Desert Discovery Center at Lake Pleasant. The completely new compliant walkway is now lighted from the Discovery Center deck to the new nature theme playground.
- The Trades Crew installed a new check valve and air release on the pond pump and installed new probes, conduit, wiring, and relays for the well pump that fills the pond at the Tres Rios golf course at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. These improvements will save water and time as the pond will now fill automatically.
- The Trades Crew continued installing metal fascia on the group ramada at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. The steel fascia provides a clean edge for the existing ramadas and ties the design elements into the surrounding area.

Trails Crew

- The Trails Crew is working on constructing the Rio Verde extension at McDowell Park. This 2.0-mile trail will separate some of the existing uses and provide a more direct route for mountain bikers accessing the Pemberton Trail for the Rio Verde entrance.
- The Trails Crew laid out and flagged the addition to the track at Estrella Mountain Regional Park Competitive Track. This addition is approximately 2.0 miles and provides an additional route and challenges for riders.

Maricopa Trail, Sun Circle, and Trail Facilities:

- Agreement preparation/negotiations:
 - Bureau of Land Management – BLM has approved the use of the route and signage on the proposed route between Estrella Mountain Park and Buckeye Hills Park. Signs to be installed in February – March.
 - City of Phoenix – IGA for Segment 1 sent to Phoenix Street Transportation Department for review.
 - ADOT – Submitted permit applications for Segment 8 under the new SR202 and Segment 33 under SR85 near Buckeye Hills Park.
- Construction - Completed 4.5 miles of new trail that will complete the connection between Estrella Mountain and Buckeye Hills Parks.
- Maintenance
 - Segment 18 – Major storm damage occurred inside Spur Cross and on the Maricopa Trail. Maintenance was completed by American Conservation Experience crew (8 days) in January 2020.
 - Segment 16 – Arizona Conservation Corps completed training of 45 personnel and provided three days of trail work north of Cave Creek Park in February 2020.
 - Segment 20 – Tonto National Forest secured two hitches for backcountry crews that were managed by the Maricopa Trail Manager. The crew completed seven miles of trail improvement and a 300-foot re-route for safety.
- Trailheads
 - Segment 11 – Sun Valley Parkway – The concrete driveway was completed 2/24/2020; Flood Control District is grading the site and placing millings.
 - Segment 27 – Bush Highway – Trailhead design completed by MCDOT; BOR License preliminarily approved. Waiting for environmental clearance. Cultural Resource Survey completed and being submitted by BOR to SHPO.
- Sign Installation, Inventory, and Mapping
 - All segments have been completed except Segment 7 (South Mountain Park) and Segment 25.
- Route Determination – Developing alternate routes for Segment 77 (Vulture Mountain to Lake Pleasant) and Segment 76 (White Tank to Vulture Mountain).

Parks Operations Report

Buckeye Hills Regional Park

- Joe Foss Shooting range continues a steady pace of public use at the shooting range and picnicking.
- In February, the Park Supervisor arranged with the shooting range operator Arizona State Rifle and Pistol Association (ASRPA) to approve an Eagle Scout project to rebuild and paint several shooting range benches this spring. A shooting range shed roof was rebuilt by park staff and hosts.
- The Estrella Park supervisor and the Parks' GIS Specialist surveyed the Buckeye Hills north boundary to establish a baseline for posts and signs to help prevent trespass, OHV, trash and camping issues on that boundary area.

Cave Creek Regional Park

- The park hosted 15 interpretive programs with 316 participants during the month of January. The highlighted program was *Clay Mine Adventure* with 99 participants and *Feeding Frenzy* with 75 park visitors.
- In February, the park hosted 18 interpretive programs with 1,148 participants attending. The highlighted program for the month was the 3RD Annual Rattlesnake Festival with 916 visitors attending a two-day event. Several interpretive rangers from other parks assisted us with this event. Thanks to all of our volunteers, this program was a great success.
- The park hosted the *Elephant Mountain Run*. The courses incorporate Go John, Quartz, Slate, Maricopa Regional Trail, Spur Cross Trail, and Tonto National Forest trails. Participants had a choice to register for a 50-mile, 50 km, 35 km, 22 km or 12 km run.
- Bella Vista College Preparatory and Cactus Shadows High School students came out to the park to help us with our Invasive Species program. The volunteers pulled and bagged Sinknet (Globe Chamomile) from a couple of areas in the park. This invasive weed is overcrowding and outcompeting native plants and is also a fire hazard. Also, students from Boulder Creek High school have individually come out through the last few months to help us remove this invasive weed.

Desert Outdoor Center (DOC)

- January brought 1,625 visitors and February brought 1,591 visitors, including two weddings, a men's retreat, and another Kairos youth retreat.
- On January 2, the DOC interpretive rangers participated in the annual Christmas Bird Count at Lake Pleasant. This year's 33 participants ended up counting 6,846 individuals of 120 species while covering over 148 miles by foot, car, and boat. The bird numbers were down from last year's count (7,577 birds of 130 species), possibly due to cold fronts and storms that may have pushed some birds out in the latter half of December (especially insectivores).
- Ranger Amber is our Department's only Master Educator for *Leave No Trace* (LNT). With the help of Ranger Terry at Lake Pleasant, they lead an LNT trainer course for all the department's interpretive rangers in January using the White Tank Nature Center classroom and Youth Campground area as learning spaces. As our department is a community partner with the Leave No Trace organization, the rangers becoming LNT trainers is the first step to sharing the LNT message throughout our system. Ranger Amber hopes to continue supporting the rangers in building our message through public programs, signage, educational brochures, and marketing through social media.
- The maintenance staff has been working hard to correct some major erosion issues around the center, especially focusing near the parking lot which has been repeatedly flooded with sediment after large storms.
- Even with a busy school schedule this February, the DOC interpretive rangers have been assisting McDowell Park by offering interpretive programming while their ranger is away.
- At the end of February, we came together with the Lake staff to celebrate all the hard work our hosts have been doing this year at our annual Volunteer Recognition celebration.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park

- Estrella Park held 20 interpretive programs and hikes in January with an attendance of 607 people. The *Moonlight Hike & Campfire* programs were quite popular with over 50 people in attendance at each.
- Aravaipa Running held a running race for 525 participants in Estrella Park on January 18. Running distances varied from 4 miles to 100 miles.
- The MBAA held a state mountain bike race for 762 bikers on January 25 in Estrella Park at the Competitive Track.
- Good weather has increased attendance at programs, hikes, picnics, and the 100 Mile Challenge.

- Estrella Park had 15 programs in February with 506 people in attendance. The most popular program was "Rattlesnakes Fact vs. Fiction" with 129 people in attendance.
- The annual Tres Rios Nature Festival was held near Estrella Park in Avondale. Estrella's interpretive ranger and several hosts manned an information and programming booth.
- Wildflowers began blooming early in the second week of February, which aligned with the interpretive hikes, programs, and social media spring blasts. Staff also noted an increase in requests from school groups to book educational programming.
- Estrella Park's interpretive ranger assisted with the Cave Creek Park's Rattlesnake Festival.
- In February, park staff partnered with the Buckeye Irrigation District to map out properties surrounding the park's north boundary and trespass areas. MCSO also has been working with the park supervisor to increase law enforcement presence and citing for such activities as OHV and vehicular trespass, shooting, and illegal trash. Positive changes are slowly being noted from the increased efforts of law enforcement, fencing, signage, and blocking illegal roads north of the park property.
- At the Competitive Track in February, park staff alerted MCSO and Avondale officers about a group of vehicles doing donuts in the parking areas. Avondale and MCSO wrote over 60 citations.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park

- The park is currently seeing an 8.1% increase in user attendance in FY20.
- The park offered 59 programs during the months of January and February to over 1,749 program participants. Program highlights included *Wildlife of Lake Pleasant*, *Find the Ranger*, and *Do You Remember When*.
- MCDOT is currently chip sealing/re-surfacing the roadways within Lake Pleasant Regional Park. The primary focus will be on Sunset Ridge Rd and the Bypass Rd.
- A volunteer service project was completed by Grand Canyon University for the Adopt-A-Trail of Yavapai Point Trail. Approximately 10 volunteers assisted with cleanup efforts along the trail.
- Bald Eagle Update: One nest currently has a pair of 5-week old baby bald eagles. Another nest location has a fierce battle among two male eagles trying to win the rights of the mama eagles attention; a second successful nest to occur this season.
- The park hosted two successful triathlon events at the end of February/beginning of March.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- In January, 13 programs were offered at the park with 95 participants. The most popular program was *Reptile Feeding* with 32 people attending.
- Three (3) Special events took place at the Park in January:
 - MBAA McDowell Mountain Meltdown a mountain bike race with 1,002 participants
 - AZ Powerman Duathlon with an estimated 200 participants.
 - SPOT Brand Bikes held a Bike Demo at the Competitive Track on January 18 and 19.
- There were seven interpretive programs and guided hikes at McDowell in February with a total of 126 attendees. The most popular programs were *Reptile Feeding* (23 people) and *Wildlife Encounter – Gopher Snake* (32 people).
- Three (3) Special events took place at the Park in February:
 - XTERRA – 14k and 7k trail running event with 325 participants
 - Pemberton 50k – trail run with 122 participants, a participant set a new record for 50k time
 - Stoneman 14k – trail run, expected 150 people, however, it rained all day and the final participant numbers were 20-30
- ASU student, Adam Zook, is completing his internship with Parks. He spent the first half working at the Parks' Headquarters office with the Natural Resources Specialist. The rest of his session will be at McDowell Park working in the entrance station, visitor center and programming. He will be with the department through mid-April.

San Tan Regional Park

- San Tan hosted 18 programs and two outreaches for a total of 520 participants.
- The park partnered with the natural resources specialist to present the Desert Defenders Invasive Species Training program to 21 participants.
- The park hosted a flashlight hike that drew 176 park visitors.
- The interpretive ranger presented at nearby Barney Middle School's Career Day with other local professionals.
- Aravaipa Running held its annual *San Tan Scramble* that brought in 502 race participants and volunteers.
- In February, San Tan hosted 21 programs for a total of 775 participants.

- The park hosted a full *Snow Moon Hike* that drew 446 people.
- The ranger and maintenance lead taught three *Intro to Archery* sessions for 26 people.
- The ranger-led a daytime guided hike to the crested saguaro with 56 people.

Spur Cross Conservation Area

- The park hosted 15 interpretive programs with 258 participants in January. The highlighted program for the month was the *Full Moon Hike* with 29 visitors and *Park to Park Hike* with 23 participants in attendance.
- In February, the park hosted 13 interpretive programs with 172 participants attending. The highlighted program for the month was the *Full Moon Hike* with 52 visitors attending and *Rock Art of Spur Cross*.
- The interpretive ranger, along with his trails volunteer, continues to complete trail maintenance throughout the park.

Usery Mountain Regional Park

- The park offered 27 interpretive programs in January totaling 1,468 participants.
- January's *Full Moon Hike & Campfire* program had 218 participants who came out and enjoyed the night hike. Hikers were treated to a campfire marshmallow roast after the hike to cap off the evening.
- Ranger Brennan's "All about Series", *Wild Horses*, had 170 people in attendance and *All About Hummingbirds* had 89 people in attendance.
- Ranger Brennan hosted eight outreach programs totaling 396 people.
- 43 riders participated in the *Tonto Twist 50 Mile Endurance Ride*. This horse ride started in Apache Junction, passing through Tonto National Forest to the Maricopa Trail and entering the park on Pass Mountain Trail. Riders used the Trailhead Staging area as a stop to water their horses and then headed out of the park back to their starting point.
- Usery hosted a Volunteer 13K project on January 16. Seven County employees participated along with three park staff. We worked with Arizona Game and Fish to remove our Gila Topminnow Fish to complete a major clean-up project and repair(s) to our Viewing Pond.
- The park received three new memorial bench requests.
- 31 interpretive programs were offered in February totaling 1,324 participants.
- A Wag 'n' Walk Adoption hike took place on February 1 with 30 people attending the program.
- Friends of Tonto National Forest along with Usery Mountain Regional Park hosted a clean-up project to remove a sizeable patch of buffelgrass growing near the top of Wind Cave Trail. Approximately 20 people helped in these efforts.
- A *Full Moon Hike and Campfire* program had 247 people participate. Other popular programs for February include *Movie Night in the Park* with 63 people, *Crazy Ranger Stories* with 70 people and *All About Rattlesnakes* with 70 people in attendance.
- Ranger "B" offered nine outreach programs in February totaling 345 participants.
- 239 archers from around the state competed in the Cactus Classic Archery Tournament hosted by the Usery Mountain Archers. The tournament was held on the walking courses at the archery range and showcased archers of all ages ranging from Pee-Wee to seniors. The Cactus Classic is the first of a four-leg archery series held in Arizona.
- Scott Bikes offered a free bike demo at the Trailhead Staging area for the mountain bike enthusiasts.

Vulture Mountains Recreation Area and Hassayampa River Preserve (HRP)

- The Preserve recorded 1,746 visitors during January. This is an approximate 14% increase over January 2019.
- HRP staff and volunteers presented 14 interpretive programs to 175 visitors in January.
- The interpretive ranger assisted with the Christmas Bird Count at Lake Pleasant.
- The interpretive ranger and department volunteer coordinator attended a volunteer fair in Wickenburg, and the volunteer coordinator hosted a volunteer orientation at the Preserve the following week.
- Park staff continued historic research on the Preserve and discovered new and exciting information to be included in new exhibits in the future.
- The Preserve recorded 2,002 visitors in February 2020. This was a 63% increase over February 2019's visitation (1,223 visitors).
- HRP staff, volunteers, and guest presenters provided 13 interpretive programs to the public (172 people) during the month with some inclement weather. Park staff, volunteers, and a visiting DOC interpretive ranger also provided five outreach programs (219 people) for several clubs and homeschool groups. The interpretive ranger also assisted White Tank Park during their annual Outdoor Adventure Day.
- February 8, 2020, set a record for the highest revenue since Parks assumed the Preserve.

- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) continued resolution of the boundary survey in anticipation of transferring the remaining acreage of the Preserve to MCPRD (currently under lease).
- Park staff met with the Friends of Hassayampa (FOH) to brainstorm possible projects for FOH to fund over the next few years.
- Planning for several upcoming construction projects continued in February.
- Work continues for the completion of 100% plans for Phase 1 improvements for Vulture Mountains.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park

- In January, 25 interpretive programs were held with 566 park visitors attending.
- Highlighted program of the month: The interpretive ranger had the unique opportunity to present a program called "For Goodness Snake" in collaboration with the White Tank Library's programming. This program was an American Sign Language-interpreted program. Snake Feeding followed this program with 101 park visitors attending.
- Two special use permits were issued in January:
 - Xterra Trail Running Race with 287 runners participating.
 - Build A Bike Mountain Bike Demo.
- In January, White Tank hosted the Maricopa Housing Authority for an employee retreat.
- A Desert Defenders training was held at White Tank in January, providing the education and opportunity for the community to become more involved in invasive species mapping in Maricopa County Parks. The White Tank Mountains Conservancy held a strong presence at this training and is excited to help Parks with this important project.
- The interpretive ranger shared his aquatic expertise with the Lake Pleasant rangers about their aquarium habitats and maintenance. The Lake ranger will be coming to White Tank in the future to share his geology expertise with White Tank staff.
- In February, 19 interpretive programs were held with 1,172 park visitors attending.
- One public outreach occurred with 50 students from France; Ranger Justin and volunteers led an interpretive hike on Waterfall Trail.
- White Tank's interpretive ranger assisted with the Cave Creek Park's Rattlesnake Festival.
- The highlighted program of February was the *Outdoor Adventure Day* which brought in 636 visitors on a beautiful Saturday in the park. Multiple events were stationed around White Tank including *Leave No Trace*, *Intro to Birding with Ranger Eric*, *Snakes and Skulls*, *Bugs*, *Biking with Andy*, and a *Hike with the Supervisor*.
- The 10th Annual Friends of White Tank Arts and Crafts Festival occurred at the end of the month. This is the park's community event of the year with free entry being offered to all attendees. Saturday was a record-setting day for the festival with 2,223 visitors and Sunday's numbers were 1,792 attendees. Over the weekend, including general park attendance and the festival attendance, the park saw a total of 8,256 visitors! At one point, the line at the entry station was close to 135 cars long, even with running double-entry lines.
- Five White Tank fulltime staff members and two core volunteers attended a free Leave No Trace workshop called "Authority of the Resource and Effective Communication" hosted at Estrella Park by the AZGFD and REI. The Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers provided training for incorporating Leave No Trace principles into park education and rule enforcement.
- On February 7, the park supervisor went on a ride-along with the Arizona Game & Fish Department's wildlife manager to view the water catchments on the north and western boundaries of the park.
- On February 29, a park visitor reported (and provided photographs) a sighting of two desert bighorn sheep near Picnic Area 5 near the Black Rock hiking trail. Park staff, the natural resource specialist and an AZGFD wildlife manager confirmed two rams. This was the first confirmed sighting of bighorn sheep in White Tank Mountain Regional Park in over 30 years.