



# Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department

## MEMORANDUM

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Morristown, AZ 85342-9887  
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HQ: 602-506-9500  
[www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks)

**Date:** March 9, 2022  
**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 2022.**

### Legislative Agenda Items:

HOUSE BILL 2130: An Act Amending Section 33-1551, Arizona Revised Statutes; Relating to Liabilities and Duties on Property Used for Education and Recreation

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:  
2 Section 1. Section 33-1551, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
3 read:  
4 33-1551. Duty of owner, lessee or occupant of premises to  
5 recreational users or educational users:  
6 liability; definitions  
7 A. A public or private owner, easement holder, lessee, tenant,  
8 manager or occupant of premises is not liable to a recreational USER or  
9 educational user except on a showing that the owner, easement holder,  
10 lessee, tenant, manager or occupant was guilty of wilful, malicious or  
11 grossly negligent conduct that was a direct cause of the injury to the  
12 recreational USER or educational user. A RECREATIONAL USER OR EDUCATIONAL  
13 USER ACCEPTS THE RISKS CREATED BY THE USER'S ACTIVITIES AND SHALL EXERCISE  
14 REASONABLE CARE IN THOSE ACTIVITIES.  
15 B. A LANDOWNER, EASEMENT HOLDER, LESSEE, TENANT MANAGER OR OCCUPANT  
16 OF PRIVATE OR PUBLIC LAND IS NOT LIABLE FOR DAMAGES IN ANY CIVIL ACTION  
17 FOR UNKNOWN CONDITIONS ON THE LAND. INSTALLING A SIGN OR OTHER FORM OF  
18 WARNING OF A DANGEROUS CONDITION, USE, STRUCTURE OR ACTIVITY, OR ANY  
19 MODIFICATION MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE SAFETY OF OTHERS, OR  
20 FAILING TO MAINTAIN OR KEEP IN PLACE ANY SIGN, OTHER FORM OF WARNING OR  
21 ANY MODIFICATION MADE TO IMPROVE SAFETY DOES NOT CREATE LIABILITY ON THE  
22 PART OF AN OWNER, EASEMENT HOLDER, LESSEE, TENANT MANAGER OR OCCUPANT OF  
23 LAND IF THERE IS NO OTHER BASIS FOR THAT LIABILITY.  
24 C. THIS SECTION IS APPLICABLE TO THE DUTIES AND LIABILITY OF ANY  
25 GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY, NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION OR PERSON THAT PROVIDES  
26 MONIES, THAT REASONABLY PERFORMS MAINTENANCE, THAT REASONABLY MAKES OR  
27 SUPPORTS IMPROVEMENTS OR THAT TAKES SIMILAR REASONABLE ACTION REGARDING  
28 LAND MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC FOR RECREATIONAL OR EDUCATIONAL  
29 PURPOSES.  
30 D. THIS SECTION DOES NOT CREATE A DUTY OF CARE OR BASIS OF  
31 LIABILITY FOR INJURY TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY. THIS SECTION DOES NOT  
32 RELIEVE ANY PERSON USING THE LAND OF ANOTHER FOR RECREATIONAL OR  
33 EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES FROM ANY OBLIGATION THAT THE PERSON MAY HAVE IN THE  
34 ABSENCE OF THIS SECTION TO EXERCISE CARE IN THE PERSON'S USE OF THAT LAND  
35 AND IN THE ACTIVITIES ON THE LAND OR FROM LEGAL CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILING  
36 TO EMPLOY SUCH CARE.  
37 E. ANY PERSON THAT USES THE LAND OF ANOTHER FOR RECREATIONAL OR  
38 EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES WITH OR WITHOUT PERMISSION IS LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGE  
39 TO THE LAND, PROPERTY, LIVESTOCK OR CROPS THAT THE PERSON MAY CAUSE WHILE  
40 ON THAT LAND.

### Bill History

<b>Sponsors</b>	GRIFFIN	P										
<b>Keywords</b>	EDUCATION, LIABILITIES, PROPERTY - TITLE 33, RECREATION, RECREATIONAL USERS											
<b>Sections Affected</b>	33-1551, 33-1551											
<b>Short Title</b>	recreational users; property											
<b>House Committees</b>	<b>Assigned Date</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Report Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Vote</b>							
	1/19/2022	LARA	1/31/2022	DP	6-5-0-0-0-0							
	1/19/2022	RULES	2/7/2022	C&P	5-3-0-0-0-0							
<b>House First Read</b>	1/19/2022											
<b>House Second Read</b>	1/20/2022											
<b>Consent Calendar</b>	2/7/2022	Object	Yes									
<b>Minority Caucus</b>	2/8/2022 Yes											
<b>Majority Caucus</b>	2/8/2022 Yes											
<b>House COW #5</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Ayes</b>	<b>Nays</b>	<b>NV</b>	<b>Exc</b>	<b>Vac</b>	<b>Emer</b>	<b>Amended</b>	<b>RFE</b>	<b>RFEIR</b>	<b>2/3 Vote</b>	<b>Action</b>
	2/17/2022	0	0	0	0	0						DPA
<b>Amendments</b>	Floor Amend to Bill - Griffin - passed											
<b>House Third Reading</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Ayes</b>	<b>Nays</b>	<b>NV</b>	<b>Exc</b>	<b>Vac</b>	<b>Emer</b>	<b>Amended</b>	<b>RFE</b>	<b>RFEIR</b>	<b>2/3 Vote</b>	<b>Action</b>
	2/17/2022	31	28	1	0	0		Yes				PASSED
<b>Transmit to Senate</b>	2/18/2022											
<b>Senate Committees</b>	<b>Assigned Date</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Report Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Vote</b>							
	2/21/2022	JUD	3/3/2022	DP	5-3-0-0-0-0							
	2/21/2022	RULES		None	0-0-0-0-0-0							
<b>Senate First Read</b>	2/21/2022											
<b>Senate Second Read</b>	2/22/2022											

The Griffin floor amendment dated 2/16/2022 at 10:06 AM repeals language that a landowner, easement holder, lessee, tenant manager, or occupant of private or public land does not owe a duty of care to keep the land safe for entry by recreational or educational users or warn of any dangerous conditions. **Instead, it declares that a landowner, easement holder, lessee, tenant manager, or occupant of private or public land is not liable for damages in any civil action for unknown conditions on the land.**

### Spur Cross Water Rights:

On January 25, 2022, the County received a notice of completeness from the Arizona Department of Water Resources to partially sever and transfer certificate of water rights No. 402. This notice puts in motion ADWR's review for substantive completeness.

### Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

Date/ Status	Tracking Number	Summary
1/12/2022 Approved	C-06-22-408-X-00	<b>Donations:</b> Accept the monthly donation report for November 2021 for the cash value of \$1,762.67.
1/12/2022 Approved	C-30-08-027-1-03	<b>Amendment Three to UMA with Casey At The Bat:</b> Approve amendment three to the Use Management Agreement deleting Section 2.7.D Ownership for Improvements upon expiration or termination in its entirety. This section is no longer applicable to this facility.
1/12/2022 Approved	C-30-22-028-X-00	<b>Approve Granting of Easement of District Parcel to Maricopa County:</b> Accept and execute a non-exclusive non-motorized Recreation Trail Easement between Flood Control District and Parks. This easement is a portion of Maricopa Trail Segment 35 which is a connecting piece between Estrella and White Tank Parks.
1/12/2022 Approved	C-06-22-381-X-00	<b>Reappointment to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission:</b> Approve the reappointment of Dr. Robert Branch to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, District 4. The term of service will be effective as of Board approval through December 31, 2023.

1/12/2022 Approved	C-06-22-425-X-00	<b>Reappointment to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission:</b> Approve the reappointment of Shelby Scharbach to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, District 1. The term of service will be effective as of Board approval through December 31, 2023.
1/26/2022 Approved	C-30-22-029-X-00	<b>Usery Mountain Regional Park Master Plan Amendment for a New Multi-Use Connector Trail to Tonto National Forest:</b> Approve master plan amendment to add a new multi-use trail to Tonto National Forest.
1/26/2022 Approved	C-64-22-301-X-01	<b>Amendment to the Bid and Award for Roadway Widening Project on Vulture Mountain Recreation Area Roads:</b> Approval of the low bid for construction that exceeds the Engineer's estimate by greater than 10%. Low bid exceeded the estimate by 36%, due to materials cost escalations, remote area for construction, competition from other projects, and labor shortages.
1/26/2022 Approved	C-06-22-448-X-00	<b>Donations:</b> Accept the monthly donation report for December 2021 for the cash value of \$1,895.15.
2/9/2022 Approved	C-73-22-062-X-00	<b>Roadrunner Campground Electrical and Plumbing Upgrades:</b> Approve the Contract for Award between Maricopa County and AJP Electric at an estimate of \$1,829,160.43 with an estimated completion date of 180 days from the official notice to proceed. The purpose of the contract is to provide construction services for electrical and plumbing upgrades for the Roadrunner Campground at Lake Pleasant for the Parks and Recreation Department.
2/23/2022 Approved	C-30-22-032-X-00	<b>Recreation or Public Purposes Lease with the Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for Usery Mountain Regional Park:</b> Approve the renewal of the existing parcel lease of 80 acres with expires on April 27, 2022, for a period of 25 years. This parcel was added to the original Usery Park property to accommodate a new model aviators recreation facility. Arizona Model Aviators is a non-profit concession authorized by BLM and the County to develop and occupy this small portion of land.
2/23/2022 Approved	C-30-11-037-3-03	<b>Termination of Commercial Management Concession Agreement with Pleasant Water Sports, LLC.:</b> Approve termination of CMCA requested by Pleasant Water Sports as they have moved their jet ski rental operations to Scorpion Bay Marina.
2/23/2022 Approved	C-06-22-515-X-00	<b>Donations:</b> Accept the monthly donation report for January 2022 for the cash value of \$3,143.93.

## Administration

### Budget Forecast (through December, run quarterly):

Department		Fund		Appropriation Unit		Expenditures			Revenue		
Code	Name	Code	Name	Code	Name	Appropriation	Detail Budget	Variance	Appropriation	Detail Budget	Variance
D300	Parks and Recreation	100	General	OPER	Operating	861313	861313	0			
D300	Parks and Recreation	225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	100000	0	100000			
D300	Parks and Recreation	225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	OPER	Operating	321657	282159	39498	341141	364965	-23824
D300	Parks and Recreation	230	Parks and Recreation Grants	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	88000	44380	43620	88000	43500	44500
D300	Parks and Recreation	230	Parks and Recreation Grants	OPER	Operating					880	-880
D300	Parks and Recreation	239	Parks Souvenir	OPER	Operating	321884	252211	69673	321884	252211	69673
D300	Parks and Recreation	240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	1638191	307145	1331046			
D300	Parks and Recreation	240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	OPER	Operating	4180807	3437241	743566	4180807	3957944	222863
D300	Parks and Recreation	241	Parks Enhancement	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	1205000	561856	643144	0		0
D300	Parks and Recreation	241	Parks Enhancement	OPER	Operating	6825259	6716781	108478	6825259	7511063	-685804
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	78500	3500	75000			
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	OPER	Operating	32240	17422	14818	47876	32968	14908
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	WMD3	Daisy Mountain And Trails	1350000	0	1350000			
D300	Parks and Recreation	296	Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Fund	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	6800000	1697636	5102364	6800000	1697636	5102364

Parks Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Submission: (page 12)

Parks Visitor Attendance Report: (page 14)

### **100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge:**

In 2011, the department was asked to develop and offer a program in honor of Arizona's Centennial Celebration which would occur on February 14, 2012. Given that the department prides itself on its ability to connect people with nature, the staff decided the primary focus of the program should be to challenge people to explore the county's beautiful Sonoran Desert in 100 days.

On November 1, 2011, the first program was launched with less than 175 participants completing the Challenge. Fast forward ten years and thousands of miles trekked, the department celebrated the 2022 season with 1,538 registered participants, 607 of whom completed the program! This is a small teaser of this year's results – the rest will be unveiled at the May meeting.

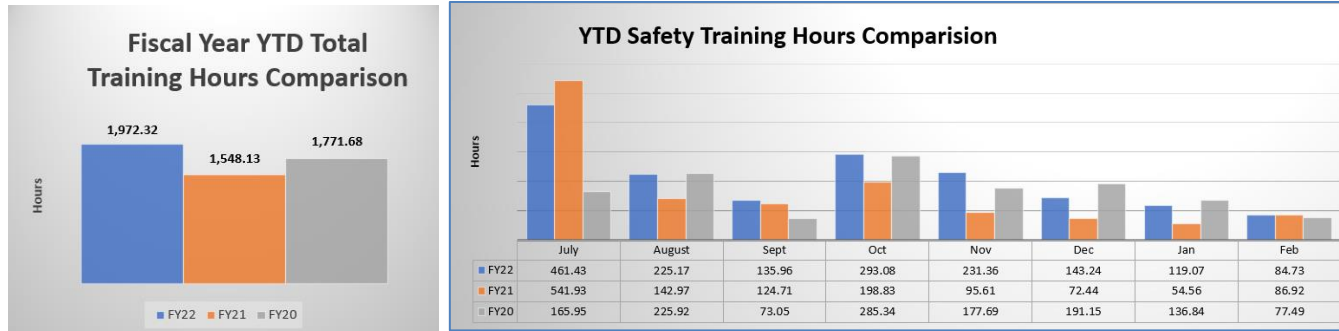
### **Contract Administration:**

- **Adobe Dam:** The Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) for a private-public partnership interested in the expansion of the existing Victory Lane Sports Park complex and/or developing vacant land adjacent to the existing Complex was issued on December 6, 2021. The closing date for the solicitation was February 10, in which we received one response.

### **Human Resources**

- **Welcome/Transfers:**
  - Kevin Thorson, Interpretive Ranger, DOC, 2/22/2022
  - Johnny Bishop, Park Maintenance Worker, transferred from Lake Pleasant to Hassayampa, 1/3/2022
- **Farewells**
  - Julian Martinez, Contact Station Assistant, San Tan, 01/19/2022
  - Cassidy Nosekabel, Interpretive Ranger, DOC, 02/05/2022
  - Terry Gerber, Interpretive Ranger, Lake Pleasant, 02/07/2022
  - Amber Gore, Park Asset and Inventory Coordinator, Headquarters, 02/21/2022
  - Dove Carpenter, Park Supervisor, White Tank, 02/12/2022
  - Melissa Martinez, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant
- **Vacancies**
  - Interpretive Ranger, DOC, PCN 17157, candidate scheduled to start 3/14/2022
  - Park Maintenance Worker, Utery, PCN 1432, candidate in background check
  - Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant, PCN 1400, in recruitment
  - Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant, PCN 67166, in recruitment
  - Custodian, White Tank, PCN 80298, in recruitment
  - Custodian, Lake Pleasant, PCN 80302, in recruitment
  - Custodian, Utery, PCN 80303, in recruitment
  - Park Asset and Inventory Coordinator, Headquarters, PCN 78302, in recruitment
  - Park Supervisor, McDowell, PCN 1480, in recruitment
  - Admin Staff Supervisor, Lake Pleasant, PCN 80307, in recruitment
  - Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, PCN 79628, in recruitment
  - Park Assistant (New), Estrella, PCN 80501, in recruitment
  - Park Assistant (New), Utery, 80503, in recruitment
  - Positions On Hold:
    - Trails Project Manager, PCN 80008
    - Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, PCN 79568 (Temp/PT)
    - Park Custodian (Temp/PT) (New), Lake Pleasant, PCN 80408
    - Park Development Superintendent (New), Planning and Development, PCN 80401
    - Park Assistant (New), White Tank, PCN 80502

**Training Hours (FY22 through February 2022):**



**Volunteer Hours (FY22 through February 2022):**

TOTAL Volunteer Hours, by month	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	YTD Total
FY22 - All Hours	3268	3362	4038	8069	11154	13295	13935	10061	0	0	0	0	67,182
FY21 - All Hours	2,800	2,738	2,699	8,598	11,094	11,790	13,369	12,121	13,745	7,826	3,962	4,428	65,209
FY20 - All Hours	1,900	1,955	3,884	7,020	10,497	12,463	12,711	12,213	13,177	7,229	3,933	2,768	62,642
FY19 - All Hours	2,754	2,824	2,968	4,373	9,230	10,390	10,847	13,141	12,575	7,832	0	0	56,527

Financial Impact of Volunteers, by Month	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	YTD Total
FY22 Financial Impact	\$88,890	\$91,446	\$109,834	\$219,477	\$303,389	\$361,624	\$379,032	\$273,659	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,827,350
FY21 Financial Impact	\$71,204	\$69,627	\$68,636	\$218,647	\$282,120	\$299,820	\$339,974	\$308,237	\$349,535	\$199,015	\$100,754	\$112,604	\$1,658,265
FY20 Financial Impact	\$48,329	\$49,703	\$98,758	\$178,512	\$266,947	\$316,943	\$323,231	\$310,569	\$335,088	\$183,844	\$100,018	\$70,398	\$1,592,992
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

Special Days of Service event listings:	Date	Attendance	Hours
White Tank - Invasive Removal	1/11/2022	4	12
White Tank - Mapping Training	1/14/2022	6	21
McDowell - Mapping Training	1/15/2022	7	21
Estrella - Competitive Track	1/15/2022	7	35
Estrella - Rainbow Track	1/16/2022	8	32
Spur Cross - Invasive Removal	1/20/2022	10	40
White Tank - REI	1/26/2022	15	30
White Tank - Invasive Removal	1/29/2022	11	44
White Tank - Trail Maintenance	1/29/2022	7	21
Cave Creek - Trail Maintenance	2/12/2022	7	28

**Planning and Development Division**

**Project Management**

- The project manager completed the Lake Pleasant Overlook Well Replacement in February. This involved replacing the pump, motor, vertical and external piping, and cleaning and rehabilitation of the well casing.
- Lake Pleasant parking lot resurfacing and stripping was started in February. This included the large 10 and 4 lane boat ramps, day-use, dump station, campground, and staff parking lots.
- The emergency access ramp was paved at the Desert Outdoor Center and will no longer be subjected to erosion.

**Trades Crew**

- The Trades Crew completed the following:
  - repaired Lake Pleasant's Discovery Center Evaporative Transportation bed and septic line
  - replaced the Usery and Estrella entry station HVAC units
  - troubleshot and repaired the electrical system at the Usery Park maintenance compound
  - received, installed, and hooked up the new (temporary) entry station at White Tank Park
  - removed the parking blocks at the Lake Pleasant North parking lot
  - White Tank Park well system electrical problem

- DOC critter cage electrical and lighting upgrade
- began cleanup and organization of the Usery Park storage yard
- Completed and submitted the AOC for the San Tan Park well system.
- Rewired San Tan well system control and float system.
- Custom fabricated table for Juanita (Native seed garden)
- Converted McDowell Park restroom lighting to LED (Interior and exterior)



*Estrella - Began Phase 1 turf reduction project. (Graded area, constructed berm, and collected boulders)*



*Cave Creek- Nature Center Gates(2)*



*Lake Pleasant - Repaired broken boundary fence boundary. (Morgan City Wash)*

#### **Maricopa Trail, Sun Circle, and Trailhead Facilities:**

The following trail segments are currently in progress – 1, 6, 7, 18, 20, 22, 27, 33, 35 76, and 77.

- Agreement preparation/negotiations
  - City of Phoenix – IGA for Segment 7 Sun Circle/Maricopa Trail in review by the City of Phoenix.
  - CAP – License application for Segment 76 submitted 12/15/2020.
  - WAPA (Western Area Power Administration) license applications (four) for Segment 76 approved 7/20/21. Verbally approved; pending receipt of the license for submittal to Board of Supervisors.
  - MCFCD (Flood Control District) – Permits approved for Segments 1 and 25 on 2/15/2022.
  - ADOT – Guadalupe Bridge re-construction with the multi-use path in planning. The I-10 rebuild project began in November 2021.
  - Tonto National Forest – Agreement completed for the Mesa Ranger District (Usery Park and MT Segment 27) and the Cave Creek Ranger District (MT Segments 20 and 22) on January 2, 2022.
- Construction
  - Repaired major fire and erosion damage from 2020 Sears Fire on Segment 22 January and February 2022 with American Conservation Experience (ACE) AmeriCorps crews. Funding is provided by the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA).
  - Hiked new 2.1-mile trail at Usery Park with archeologist for Cultural Resource Survey in February 2022. Construction will be scheduled when the final report is complete.
  - Deployed two Trails toolboxes and tools with MCSO helicopter at Maricopa Trail Segment 20 and White Tank Park February 2022. The boxes and tools were provided by the Maricopa Trail + Parks Foundation.
- Maintenance
  - The Trails Specialist conducted a Trail Maintenance training session for the Parks Maintenance crews in January 2022.
  - Began AmeriCorps (ACE) crew deployment January 2022 and continued until 2/23/2022 with two crews at Cave Creek and Lake Pleasant Parks. Work includes Parks' personnel completing equipment work ahead of the crews. Funding is provided by the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA).
  - Received a quote for Merkle Trail repair at Usery Park in January 2022.
- Route Determination
  - Segment 77 Vulture Mountain to Lake Pleasant – Submitted route to BLM 1/25/21. Site visits completed April 2021. Refined new trail routes in January 2022.
  - Segment 76 White Tank to Vulture Mountain - Submitted route to BLM 1/25/21. Site visits completed May 2021. Refined route December 2021. Holding monthly BLM (Bureau of Land Management) meetings. Working with BOR (Bureau of Reclamation) and CAP (Central Arizona Project) on CAP canal alignment near Hassayampa River.

- Estrella Park – Determining route for new trails in Park and at Comp Track for Cultural Resource Survey February 2022.

### Natural Resources

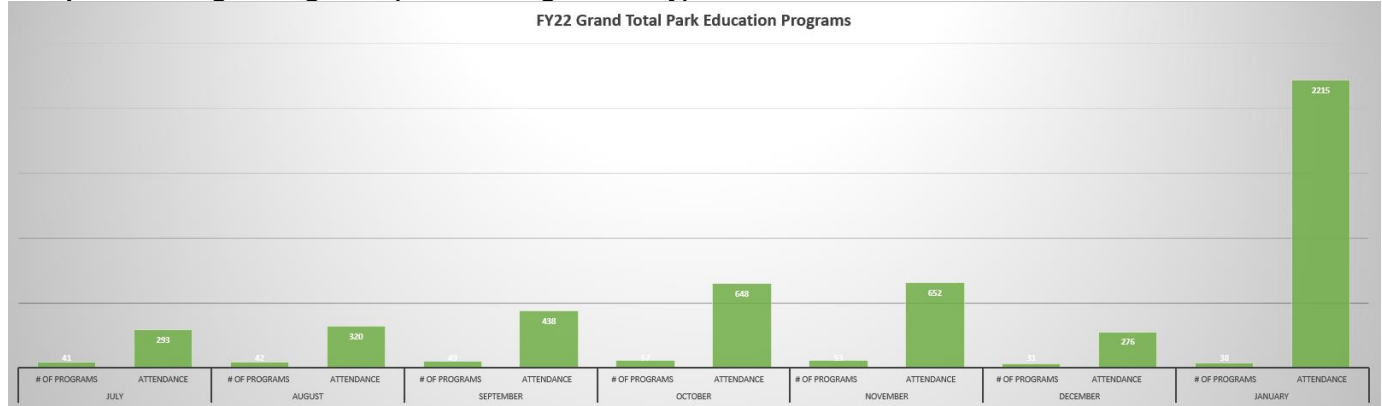
- The Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) hosted the Desert Defenders Mapping and Invasive Species Removal training events for the Winter-Spring 2022 for 12 new volunteers to map invasive species. In addition, the Department hired five ASU Interns (unpaid) to map eight of the parks, they will be mapping twice weekly until late April and have already mapped 989 invasive species locations. We hosted five removal events, training, and additional 24 volunteers' proper removal techniques. Collectively, the group removed 28.5 bags with over 6,000 invasive plants covering approximately 5 acres at Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area and White Tank Mountain Regional Park. As we continue to build our natural reserve stewardship program, two of the five events were hosted or co-hosted by volunteers from White Tank Mountain Conservancy and the Arizona Master Naturalists.
- The Natural Resource Plan has been in development as baseline data and current conditions for all the parks are compiled and included in the draft Plan. The plan is currently going through staff edits and should be completed and ready to roll out with the Strategic System Master Plan.
- The NRS worked with Botanists from the Chicago Region and the Desert Botanic Garden to create a Floristic Quality Assessment (FQA) tool. An FQA is a value-driven tool used to assess an area's ecological integrity based on its plant species composition. FQA metrics are used in decision-making for managing natural areas' ecological integrity and are based on plant species composition. The team provided a C value to over 1,600 plants that occur within Maricopa County. The rollout of this tool will occur on March 24 as a Central Arizona Conservation Alliance (CAZCA) speaker series event. To join the event, register here: <https://cazca.org/events/speaker-series-an-fqa-for-maricopa-county/>

### Parks Planner

- Parks Vision 2030:
  - Expanded work on benchmarking, reached out to agencies benchmarking against for additional information and confirmation of the accuracy of data.
  - The regional plan section has been drafted and is going through review.
  - The project schedule has been updated.
  - A park planning intern started in January from ASU and is helping to review demographic data from the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) associated with river corridor revitalization. Also located data around the Maricopa and Sun Circle Trails.
  - The process has started to categorize and review approximately 3,000 unique comments submitted from the Parks Vision 2030 public outreach feedback form. The outreach chapter is being revised.
  - Collected additional contacts and reached out to tribal communities in Maricopa County for the regional plan section of the report.
  - Meetings held with the USFWS, USFS – Tonto National Forest (TFN), BLM, MCDOT, MAG, Maricopa County Innovation Studio/ASU School of Design, City of Phoenix Parks Department, Lower Gila River Collaborative, North Valley Outdoor Network, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.
  - Conducted a field visit with TNF representatives to Table Mesa Road, New River, and Seven Springs. Set field trips to Horseshoe Reservoir/Verde River on March 25 and Rio Verde/Needle Rock on April 22.
  - Letter sent to BLM regarding solar projects in west Valley and future regional connectivity discussions.
- The Department has sent a letter to BLM regarding coordinating on the Vulture Mountain Regional Park development and construction of re-routes in the northern parcel.

**Parks Operations Report**

**Interpretive Ranger Programs (FY22 through January)**



**Cave Creek Regional Park**

- The staff has been busy coordinating two upcoming Events - *The Elephant Mountain Run* scheduled at Cave Creek and Spur Cross in February and the *Ultraman Triathlon* scheduled at Lake Pleasant and Cave Creek in March.
- The American Conservation Experience (ACE) crew has been completing trail maintenance on the backside of the Go John Trail. They will return in February to complete maintenance on the Flume Trail.
- Cave Creek Trail Rides (Concessionaire) shut down for a few days to enhance the area. They are painting the office, tack shed and repairing some drainage issues.
- In partnership with Aravaipa Running, the Elephant Mountain Run part of the Desert Runner Trail Series occurred for organized trail runs across Maricopa County. The course incorporated Go John, Quartz, Slate, Maricopa Regional Trail, Spur Cross Trail, and Tonto Trails. Five hundred participants chose to run a 50mile, 50 km, 35 km, 22 km, or 12 km.



*Cave Creek- Mine repairs before photo*



*Mine Security after photo*



## Desert Outdoor Center



*DOC - New Ranger, Kevin Thorson, a Master Naturalist, becoming a Master Gardner, and previously worked at the Phoenix Zoo.*

- The Desert Outdoor Center reopened in January 2022 after being closed in 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Rangers hosted sixteen (16) schools.
- Several Rangers attended the Tres Rios Nature Festival near Estrella Mountain Regional Park on February 26 & 27. They worked at the Parks information booth with over 1,000 festival participants walking by, stopping & talking, and offering a Gila Monster presentation on stage.

## Estrella Mountain Regional Park

- Irrigation system repairs and in-ground fieldwork were completed in January to prepare for a new set of trees and bushes planted with a CIP project.
- Special Use Events:
  - In January, 650 participants with Aravaipa Running enjoyed various distances running on our park trails.
  - MBAA held their state mountain bike race on the competitive track with 634 participants. Many compliments were given on the park trails and competitive track.
  - On February 5th, the Med Wars event had 45 medical students and professionals running and mountain biking to medical question locations.
  - On February 12th, the Race Timers Run had 78 runners.



*Estrella – February 19<sup>th</sup> -trees and shrub planting, cooperative effort with Wildlife Habitat Council – park staff and volunteers along with Park Commissioner, Eric Mears*

## Hassayampa River Preserve



*Hassayampa - The Preserve saw approximately 1/2" of much-needed rain, followed by a spectacular hailstorm.*

- A Request For Proposal (RFP) process has been started for the Hassayampa Visitor Center's exhibits.
- Staff attended a virtual meeting for the upcoming Hassayampa BioBlitz (biodiversity citizen science project).
- The Park Supervisor met with Vulture City staff regarding Hassayampa River Preserve being a venue for the *Impressions of Vulture Mine City* juried art show in April.
- The first rattlesnake of the year was seen on January 7<sup>th</sup>. The Interpretive Ranger attended Desert Defender training at White Tank in anticipation of assisting with Invasive weed-pulling events this spring.
- The Preserve saw some extreme temperatures in February, with a low of 21 degrees! Despite these low temps, the first bird nest of the season was spotted mid-month. This Anna's hummingbird nest has been the earliest nest for several years now and has been built in the same location year after year.
- Planning for several upcoming events occurred, including the Hassayampa BioBlitz (citizen science), the Vulture City art show, the Mesquite Festival, and the Preserve's annual poetry contest.
- The Preserve also participated in the *Great Backyard Bird Count*, hosting several bird walks and "big sits" to highlight this annual citizen science event.

### Lake Pleasant Regional Park

- Terry Gerber officially retired on February 6th after 25+ years; we wish him well in his future endeavors.
- We say goodbye to Zach and Mary - campground hosts; they have supported Lake Pleasant Regional Park for three years.
- Lake level - 1,682 feet (77%) - and rising. The Nav Aid team proactively and aggressively relocated buoys, repaired the eagle enclosure line, re-secured dock lines, and inspected all aspects of the Lake after multiple days of high-wind events.
- Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) contract archaeologists are in the Park's northern portion to complete surveys; surveying will be completed in February
- An assessment of the Lake's trails, in conjunction with Cave Creek Regional Park, is in progress. The project is scheduled to be completed by mid-April.
- American Conservation Experience (ACE), an AmeriCorp subsidiary, finished four of their five trail work hitches throughout the park; the last hitch begins in March.
- The Navigational Aid Team replaced lake buoys with new ones as older ones deteriorated and were damaged.
- Arizona Game and Fish Department's Nest Watchers - arrived at the Agua Fria area for bald eagle monitoring.
- The *Iceman Triathlon* was a successful event on February 26<sup>th</sup>

### McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- Trail repairs are progressing on our barrier-free trail (Nursery Tank). Staff members are clearing overgrown cattails from the pond and trimming trees back from the viewing area. Thirteen volunteers assisted with trimming, repairing, and raking the trail area.
- Special Use Events:
  - The Park enjoyed its first annual Cheers with Long Ears special event. This event featured 46 runners leading their donkeys on a 4-mile or 10-mile race. The race was quite amusing, with the runners using treats to lead their donkeys down the trail.
  - 22nd year of the Pemberton Trail 50k/25k is part of the McDowell Mountain Cup.
  - The Stoneman Trail Run was completed.
  - Three hundred runners participated in the Xterra event in early February. Runners could choose the 10k on the Scenic Trail, 15k on the Escondido/Scenic Trails, or the Marathon course on the Pemberton.
  - The Powerman Duathlon had approximately 150 participants running and biking.
  - Scottsdale Artist School - 60 budding artists drawing/painting the beauty of the Sonoran Desert.
  - In addition, an AirStream Club with 40 units glimmering in the sun stayed in the group campground.
- Maintenance: The new park maintenance employee, Sergio Cola, an experienced horticulturalists, trimmed trees throughout the campgrounds.

### San Tan Mountain Regional Park



*San Tan – Park maintenance teamed up with 18 San Tan Shredders' bike group members to perform four miles of trail work on the Malpais Trail.*

- San Tan sold 1,010 annual passes (200 more than January 2021).
- Maintenance staff pruned overgrowth in the tortoise enclosures and along portions of the San Tan Trail. They also repaired the swinging gate and fence section damaged by a vehicle at Rock Peak Wash parking lot.
- Aravaipa Running held their annual San Tan Scramble event with 484 participants, staff, and volunteers.

### Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

- The interpretative ranger and volunteers completed minor trail work throughout the month.
- The Ranger and trail volunteers continue to complete minor trail maintenance. In addition, the Interpretive Ranger continues to assist Cave Creek Park staff with mine closures.

### Usery Mountain Regional Park

- Usery Park hosted the annual *Tonto Twist*, an equestrian event with 45 people participating.
- Desert Botanical Garden hosted a photography class with fifteen participants.
- Staff attended a trail work training at Usery Park on January 26, 2022.
- Staff installed three memorial benches (two on Levee trail and one on Blevins).
- Special Use Event:
  - Aravaipa Mountain Bike event, with nearly 150 people participating.
  - A youth mountain bike event was offered to introduce youth to the sport; clinics were provided along with a small competition taking place; nearly 100 youth participated.
  - Usery Mountain Archery Club offered their annual Cactus Classic Shoot, a weekend-long tournament for youth and adults, nearly 175 people participated.

### White Tank Mountain Regional Park

- The new temporary Park owned entrance station was delivered on January 18<sup>th</sup>. The Trades Crew removed the rental unit that morning and had the new station up and running within a few hours! This temporary entrance station is designed to be a more efficient workspace for entrance staff and volunteers while the new roadway and entrance project continues.
- Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) staff have been at the Park frequently surveying the entire front entrance area for future roadway changes. If you see flagging in this area, this is the result of their work.
- Sadly, Park Supervisor Dove Carpenter decided to leave White Tank Regional Park to spend more time with her new family; we wish her the best. Park Supervisor, Grady Hudson of McDowell will be internally transferring to her position upon departure.
- Fifteen REI Distribution Center employees worked with park staff to create a path around the new wildlife pond as part of their new employee orientation. This was the first service event with REI staff since COVID started, and it was great to have them back in the Park!
- West Valley Trail Alliance organized a volunteer trail-work event on the Competitive Track Trails. Seven hard-working volunteers prepared the trails for the upcoming mountain bike race in February.
- Special Use Event:
  - On February 26<sup>th</sup>, *Spokes & Ale Festival and Race* event was held in our competitive track with 250 participants.
  - *Take A Kid* bike riding event at the West Valley Trail Alliance festival experienced a record number of kids learning to ride a mountain bike.
- Joe Ford, an experienced Audubon birder and long-time service volunteer at White Tank and Estrella returned to lead a bird walk.



**Maricopa County**  
 Parks & Recreation Department

41835 N. Castle Hot Springs Rd  
 Morristown, AZ 85342  
 Phone: (602) 506-2930

**To:** Cindy Goelz, Budget Director

**From:** R.J. Cardin, Director, Parks & Recreation Department *RJC*

**Date:** January 28, 2022

**Re:** **Parks and Recreation Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Submission**

Based on the requirements established by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation is submitting our FY2023 Budget to reflect our ongoing focus on the visitor experience through quality parks and trails while being outstanding stewards of the Sonoran Desert and natural open spaces. This submission is sustainable and structurally balanced across all special revenue funds and our General Fund submittal is at baseline.

The following tables represent revenue and expenditure requests for FY23:

**Revenue by Fund**

Fund	Name	Target	Submittal	Variance	Percent
225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	\$341,141	\$346,912	\$5,771	2%
239	Parks Souvenir	\$321,884	\$324,423	\$2,539	1%
240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	\$4,180,807	\$4,051,622	(\$129,185)	-3%
241	Parks Enhancement	\$6,825,259	\$7,392,088	\$566,829	8%
243	Parks Donations	\$47,876	\$38,147	(\$9,729)	-20%

**Expenditure by Fund**

Fund	Name	Target	Submittal	Variance	Percent
100	General	\$861,313	\$861,313	\$0	0%
225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	\$321,657	\$346,912	\$25,255	8%
239	Parks Souvenir	\$321,884	\$324,423	\$2,539	1%
240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	\$4,180,807	\$4,051,622	(\$129,185)	-3%
241	Parks Enhancement	\$6,825,259	\$7,392,088	\$566,829	8%
243	Parks Donations	\$32,240	\$38,147	\$5,907	18%

This submittal reflects current operating conditions and changes anticipated to impact our revenue. Most notable, we anticipate reduced revenue in our Lake Pleasant Recreation Fund due to the planned closure of Roadrunner Campground for significant electrical and site upgrades from July 2022 to December 2022. Fortunately, the Parks Enhancement and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Funds remain strong with current attendance and revenue projections demonstrating ongoing growth in day use activities (hiking, picnicking) and camping. To further assist with budget analysis, the following items have been included in our FY23 submittal:

Parks and Recreation FY23 Transmittal Letter  
Page 2 of 2

- Vacancy saving projections at 10% for FY23. In FY22, vacancy savings are forecasted at 14% in F241 and 20% in F240.
- Performance raises in the amount of 5% have been included.
- Restructuring Park's educational programming by centralizing Park Interpretive Rangers under one supervisor, reducing the number of staff while ensuring program quality and consistency across all parks.
- Restructuring within Park Administration from three divisions (Operating, Administration, and Planning/Development) to two (Operations and Administration).
- Review of current job duties for Park Maintenance staff, lowering costs by replacing Park Maintenance positions with Park Custodian positions where job duties involve cleaning and custodial duties vs. repair and maintenance.
- Increasing staffing at the individual parks with new Office Assistants to provide customer service and revenue collection during all hours of operation.

In addition to the operating submittal, Parks is requesting non-recurring funding in our Enhancement, Lake, Spur Cross, Souvenir and Donation funds. This money will be focused on high priority projects including building/amenity repair and maintenance (nature center painting, HVAC, water heaters, etc.), infrastructure maintenance and upgrades (electrical, water delivery systems, septic), fleet vehicles, construction of new and upgraded trails, trail and informational signage, and other amenities for our park visitors. Parks is also requesting non-recurring funding in F225 to purchase a small parcel of land surrounded on three sides by the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. Providing a quality visitor experience is critical for user satisfaction and revenue generation to support the park system for a growing population; non-recurring funding is pivotal to ensure high priority projects are completed, directly impacting the quality of our amenities.

Thank you for your acceptance and continued support of Maricopa County Parks and Recreation. We remain committed to providing a high-quality, safe and healthy recreational and educational experience for our visitors and the citizens of Maricopa County. Over many years, Parks has a demonstrated track record of operating in the most fiscally responsible manner. As an example, our volunteer program is on track to top 100,000 labor hours in FY22, offsetting staffing costs by \$2,854,000 (<https://independentsector.org/value-of-volunteer-time-2021/>). Our FY23 submittal reflects our commitment to provide an essential public service while ensuring financial stability.

At any time throughout OMB's analysis phase, please feel free to contact me and/or Parks Administrator, Aimee Upton for assistance.

**Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Visitor Attendance Report  
 FY2022 (through February 2022)**

FY22	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	MONTH TO DATE	% of Change (M to M)	YEAR TO YEAR	% of Change (YtoY)
FY21	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21				
FY20	Jul 19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20				
<b>Cave Creek</b>	1,381	1,198	2,515	6,747	7,873	15,242	13,502	13,094	-	-	-	-	61,552	22.2%	61,552	-25.7%
FY21	1,122	911	1,325	4,688	12,084	12,121	7,593	10,523	16,939	8,367	4,046	3136	50,367	-5.7%	82,855	-3.1%
FY20	363	505	959	4,233	9,450	9,775	13,542	14,572	16,079	11,336	3,145	1552	53,399	2.9%	85,511	3.0%
<b>Estrella Park</b>	1,184	1,278	2,605	5,891	7,398	12,222	14,310	12,180	-	-	-	-	57,068	-17.2%	57,068	-42.6%
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	68,920	29.8%	99,419	12.4%
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	53,090	9.0%	88,415	6.2%
<b>McDowell Mtn</b>	964	1,310	2,032	7,745	8,208	15,958	15,560	15,706	-	-	-	-	67,483	-20.0%	67,483	-41.0%
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	84,378	8.3%	114,322	-4.0%
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	77,895	7.7%	119,147	11.5%
<b>San Tan Park</b>	3,753	4,506	4,105	9,045	18,584	21,434	30,452	26,402	-	-	-	-	118,281	-26.6%	118,281	-46.7%
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	161,075	41.3%	222,080	10.3%
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	114,011	6.2%	201,300	18.8%
<b>Spur Cross</b>	299	395	500	1,484	2,859	4,031	7,069	8,168	-	-	-	-	24,805	9.6%	24,805	-32.2%
FY21	171	121	354	1,984	3,826	5,218	6,273	4,695	7,886	4,093	1318	620	22,642	47.0%	36,559	59.2%
FY20	113	122	244	730	826	4,208	4,592	4,569	4,508	2,276	563	210	15,404	22.5%	22,961	-3.0%
<b>Usery Mtn Park</b>	3,926	2,811	5,039	14,212	16,450	38,086	29,834	30,249	-	-	-	-	140,607	-20.2%	140,607	-40.7%
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	176,251	14.3%	237,303	-3.5%
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	154,166	0.9%	245,843	3.3%
<b>White Tank</b>	4,923	4,068	5,201	17,768	20,775	42,163	36,298	35,679	-	-	-	-	166,875	-14.3%	166,875	-38.0%
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	194,715	8.2%	269,222	-9.8%
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	179,878	-4.6%	298,460	0.0%
<b>Hassayampa</b>	286	333	423	1105	2,669	1,790	1,771	2,096	-	-	-	-	10,473	-4.8%	10,473	-38.8%
FY21	855	632	840	1681	1,984	1,204	2,014	1,786	2,363	1,672	1513	555	10,996	21.0%	17,099	-0.9%
FY20	453	418	591	1405	1,498	971	1,746	2,002	2,321	2,477	2072	1294	9,084	19.4%	17,248	18.9%
<b>Lake Pleasant</b>	88,853	62,651	64,323	50,169	38,347	45,239	35,415	44,353	-	-	-	-	429,350	-5.0%	429,350	-40.6%
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	452,100	23.8%	722,833	-0.3%
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	365,097	8.1%	725,012	7.6%
<b>DOC</b>	0	-	0	-	43	-	84	1,178	-	-	-	-	1,305	#DIV/0!	1,305	#DIV/0!
FY21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100.0%	0	-100.0%
FY20	140	64	381	1,556	1887	1,330	1,622	1,630	1,030	0	0	0	8,610	10.9%	9,640	-22.7%
<b>SYSTEM TOTAL</b>	105,569	78,550	86,743	114,166	123,206	196,165	184,295	189,105	-	-	-	-	1,077,799	-11.8%	1,077,799	-40.2%
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	1,221,444	18.5%	1,801,692	-0.7%
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	1,030,634	5.3%	1,813,537	12.6%