



Maricopa County

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

Date: May 14, 2015
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 March and April 2015.

From the Office of the Director

The Legacy Sports Project continues to move forward. Negotiations for a Use Management Agreement to develop a state-of-the-art premiere sports park in partnership with our existing concessionaire, Victory Lane Sports, are progressing well. A pre-development meeting was held with the Maricopa County Flood Control District to discuss the pre-design and permits that may be necessary for the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). As requested by Flood Control, a Preliminary Pre-development Design Report was prepared and sent to Flood Control; they will forward to ACOE for review and comment. A meeting was also held with the City of Phoenix to discuss the development process and presented them with the Preliminary Pre-Design Report. Both Flood Control and the City of Phoenix show enthusiasm towards this new development. The project will greatly enhance the park, offer a new athletic venue for the public and provide additional revenue for the Department.

After 25 years of Service to Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, Trades Supervisor, Rand Mozingo, retired in March. His extensive knowledge, smiling face and friendship will be greatly missed.

Administration

Budget Status (through April FY15 close):

- Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:
 - Enhancement Fund reported revenues of 11% or \$458,279 over the YTD budget of \$3,994,423.
 - Enhancement Fund reported expenditures of 3% or \$91,176 under the YTD operating budget of \$3,620,213.
- Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:
 - Lake Fund reported revenues of 17% or \$329,646 over the YTD budget of \$1,919,095.
 - Lake Fund reported operating expenditures at 12% or \$247,732 under the YTD budget of \$2,055,156.
- Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306:
 - Spur Cross reported revenues at 2% or \$5,157 over the YTD budget of \$226,911.
 - Spur Cross reported operating expenditures at 4% or \$7,790 under the YTD budget of \$217,401.

Finance Program:

- Program staffs are starting to prepare for the end of Fiscal Year 2015. The initial end-of-year date reminders have been sent and final budget forecasting is being completed.
- A special project to create a grant catalog is almost completed. The project is to make a listing of all grants the department has received, with other pertinent information, so that staff has one easily accessed location to find grant information for any park or location.
- The FY16 Recommended Budget has been received. Overall, all Parks' requests were approved with the exception of no funding was provided for Hassayampa River Preserve/Vulture Mountain operations or capital projects.
- A new inventory asset tracking system is currently being developed. This new system will streamline the existing data into one easy to find catalog.

Contracts:

- **Lake Pleasant Regional Park:** Capital Hotel Management (CHM) is midway through their market and financial analysis for the proposed improvements at Lake Pleasant. The City of Peoria is very interested in the outcome of this analysis and has inquired about developing a more complex scope for the analysis of utilities, along preliminary discussions of road improvements and costs. The cost for this additional scope was sent to Peoria's Economic Development Director and he is checking on the availability of funds.
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park:** The draft Use Management Agreement for Estrella Youth Sports (EYS), for the upgrade and expansion of our existing baseball fields and future multipurpose fields has been sent to EYS for review and comment. Further direction will be pending the final decision of the Estrella Mountain Regional Park Master Plan.
- **Adobe Dam Regional Park:**
 - The 500 Club has completed the necessary Army Corps of Engineer's Application for 408 Permit for constructing an addition to their existing building and construction of a new banquet hall building at the Golf Course.
 - Upcoming Special Use Permits processed for May-June at Adobe Dam Park include:
 - May 16, Wet 'N' Wild Fireworks – Private Event
 - May 24, Wet 'N' Wild Fireworks – Memorial Day Celebration
 - April 24 – May 5, Phoenix Kart Racing Association Spring Nationals
- **Commercial Management Concessions Agreements (CMCA's):** New CMCA's include two new fishing guide concessionaires. A Special Use Permit was issued in the interim of the Board of Supervisors approval for the Agreement for "Out of the Blue". This concessionaire will be providing luxury boat cruises.

Human Resources:

- **New Hires or Promotions:**
 - Welcome to Kristin Gamblin, Administrative Assistant at Cave Creek Park
 - Congratulations to Grady Vanpopering who was selected for the Park Maintenance Worker at Lake Pleasant. Grady moved from a Contact Station Assistant to his new position on 4/27/15.
- **Farewells:**
 - Farewell to Rand Mozingo, Trades Supervisor, who retired after 25 years with Parks on March 2, 2015.
 - Farewell to Christie Chatfield, Souvenir Fund Coordinator, whose last day with Parks was March 10, 2015.
- **Open positions and recruitments:**
 - Contact Station Assistant - 3 Temp positions (Lake Pleasant) – Pending hire actions.
 - Park Maintenance Supervisor (Lake Pleasant) – Open for recruitment.
 - Trades Supervisor - Interviews pending.

Information Technology:

- A request for an integrated phone system for Lake Pleasant Regional Park was completed and forwarded to OET (Office of Enterprise Technology) for implementation. Zona Communications has responded and the new phone system will be installed in June 2015 with the work completed once the new Visitor Center is finished (approx. Sept/Oct 2015).
- Barcode printers for each park have been received and programming to add them to the network is completed. Installation will occur in May and June
- The scope of work for a new maintenance work order system has been completed and is in review. Once finalized, the Department will send out for proposals.
- The POS/Reservation (Point of Sale) contract has been finalized. We are now working with Itinio for a tentative implementation date of July 1, 2015. This is the same vendor that provides POS and reservation services to Arizona State Parks.
- The responses for our Website refresh project have been received and a vendor has been selected (pending final approval). There were 82 total responses with prices ranging from \$7,000 to \$108,000.
- A formal review of all Parks and Recreation phone bills/charges has been completed. The review resulted in four phone lines being cancelled for a monthly savings of \$98.12. In addition, changes were made to the cell phone plans for two employees, saving an additional \$30/month (yearly savings of \$1,537.44).

Souvenir Fund:

- Parks has set up corporate accounts at Sam's Club to allow park staff to pick up their Sam's Club orders directly (instead of HQ staff picking up product and storing at HQ). This should improve the lag time between placing a Sam's Club order and receipt of product by the park.
- The full FY16 souvenir product line and vendors have been selected and forwarded to staff.
- Procurement staff met with Excel Screen Printing, provider of our park logo shirts, to review the ordering process and improve communications. Last year, there were several issues which caused significant delays in obtaining product. The new changes and ordering format will create considerable improvements to efficiency.

Volunteer Program:

- March's volunteer project took place in the north area of Lake Pleasant. The area has been overused and abused by off-road vehicle enthusiasts and needed rehabilitation. In partnership with Park staff, the Conservation Alliance and seven volunteers assisted to cover damaged areas with vegetation, rocks, boulders, and raking to discourage future vehicle use. The area needs continuous work, but the time and efforts of the volunteers was a good start.
- There were several special projects for episodic volunteers in the month of April. Cave Creek hosted a group of 16 who cleaned up trails, McDowell hosted a group from Ragnar Trail racing who assisted with trail work, and Lake Pleasant had a group of 55 from American Express who completed four projects.
- The Earth Day trail maintenance project took place on April 18th. The group of 27 volunteers from all over the valley worked on an area of the Maricopa Trail near Lake Pleasant under the highway 74 bridge at Beardsley CSR Road. The group built a few small foot bridges over a creek, cleared fallen branches, and improved the trail. The project was in partnership with the Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation who provided assistance in registration as well as borrowing a tool trailer from the Arizona Trail Foundation. *Hands On Greater Phoenix* supported in recruiting and the Conservation Alliance provided snacks and beverages for the volunteers.
- All of the host appreciation parties took place in March and early April. The hosts and several community volunteers were provided a party that included lunch and a small gift as a token of appreciation for their many hours of service. Parks Director, R.J. Cardin, Operations Manager, Jennifer Waller, as well as Regional Superintendents Jennifer Johnston and Teresa Retterbush, were in attendance at all parties to thank the hosts in person.

- Year-to-Date Volunteer Hours:

	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-14	Apr-15
Total Dept. Hours	2708	3303.5	3082.75	6101.83	9726	12287	12682	12547.85	13328.57	9876
Financial Savings	\$61,065	\$74,494	\$69,516	\$137,596	\$219,321	\$277,072	\$285,979	\$282,954	\$300,559	\$222,704
YTD Hours	2708	6011.5	9094.25	15196.08	24922.08	37209.08	49891.08	62438.93	75767.5	85643.5
YTD Savings	\$61,065	\$135,559	\$205,075	\$342,672	\$561,993	\$839,065	\$1,125,044	\$1,407,998	\$1,708,557	\$1,931,261
Prev. Year Month Total Hours	4052.25	2968.25	4252.45	5775.65	9401.25	9194.2	10204.35	20180.8	11224.6	8488.2
Prev. Year YTD Hours	4052.25	7020.5	11272.95	17048.6	26449.85	35644.05	45848.4	66029.2	77253.8	92812
Prev. Year Financial Savings	\$89,717	\$155,434	\$249,583.11	\$377,456.00	\$585,599.68	\$ 789,159.27	\$ 1,015,083.50	\$ 1,461,886.40	\$ 1,710,399.10	\$ 1,898,327.80
Number of Volunteers-current month	43	50	98	181	184	200	213	253	235	311

Planning and Development (Engineering) Highlights as of May 7, 2015

- Estrella Master Plan:** Progress is on-going. Staff is continuing to coordinate with Estrella Youth Sports (EYS) regarding the “sports-field” project and with the City of Goodyear regarding the “brine-wetland” project. The first public meeting was held April 30th and was well attended. The public comment period is open until May 30th. Staff is in the process of preparing a press release.
- Vulture Mountain Update:** A field visit to see the preliminary roadway layout was held April 16th. Based on this visit, staff will be following up with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and will continue to work with the Department of Transportation (MCDOT) on refining the roadway design for the day-use, camping and off-highway vehicle (OHV) areas.
- System Wide:**
 - The refurbishment of all (~75) restrooms (RRs), for all the parks began in January 2014. The project is expected to take four years and cost ~\$4 million. With the help of two “Job Order Contract” (JOC) contractors, staff is working to standardize interior and exterior finishes and hardware improvements throughout the park system.
 Current Status: 7 RR (all) are complete at Cave Creek; 1 RR, which includes major septic maintenance, is complete at Estrella; 7 RR (all) are complete at McDowell; 2 RR have been completed at Usery; 10 RR (all of the “older” ones) are complete at White Tank; 1 RR has been completed and work is underway for 4 more at Lake Pleasant.
 - Additionally, septic pumping and miscellaneous upgrades have been completed at nearly all of the parks. Approximately \$980k was spent in FY 2014 and approximately \$735k has been spent thus far in FY 2015.
 - New playground equipment, including a “giant” mountain lion “climber/slide” has been installed at Estrella. Relocation of shade structures is in process. A new “scorpion with a slide” has been installed at Cave Creek. Specialized outdoor “circuit” fitness equipment is currently being installed at Usery.
 - The San Tan well project was successful and water was hit on March 23rd. The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) water testing and permit process is continuing. Preliminary results indicate good-quality water.
 - A project to upgrade the electrical system at the White Tank maintenance compound is starting May 7th and a project to construct new electrical hook ups for individual camp sites in the overflow area at Cave Creek should start in mid-May.
 - The water chlorination systems for the Lake and the DOC are complete.
 - A project initiated by SRP to install communications equipment at several of the east-side parks is nearly complete.

- **Maricopa Trail and Trail Facilities:**
 - The following trail segments are currently being worked on: 9, 11, 12, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33, 35 and 78.
 - The following segments were constructed in April:
 - Segment 27 Bulldog Trailhead to Usery Mountain Park (1.5 miles)
 - Segment 27 Pass Mountain Trail inside Usery Mountain Park (1.5 miles)
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 FRS (Flood Retarding Structure) to White Park – reconstruction due to storm damage (.5 miles)
 - Segment 9 Tres Rios (300 feet).
 - Segment 11 McMicken Dam Trail Repair (300 feet).
 - Segment 11 McMicken Dam Outfall to Westwing Substation (.5 miles).
 - The following portions of the Maricopa Trail are in final agreement stages for perpetual easements on FCD property:
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 Dam – 2.1 miles
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 Outfall Channel – 2 miles (5/20/15 BOS Agenda item)
 - Planning new trails in the Tonto National Forest – Cave Creek and Mesa Ranger Districts, the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and on the Central Arizona Project – south of Lake Pleasant Park, El Rio, Tres Rios, Verrado and the Fort McDowell Indian community.
 - Performing maintenance Segment 11 Westwing Trail (.5 miles)
 - Installing additional signage.
- **Trades Crew:** The Trades Crew completed major maintenance to the perimeter fencing at the 500 Club Golf Course at Adobe. The Crew is assisting with the electric projects at White Tank and Cave Creek. The Crew completed eye-wash station work for all the new chlorinators. A significant water line break was repaired and electrical repair work is ongoing at Estrella. The Crew completed repairs to a major restroom septic system at the Lake and the RR was reopened on March 26th. The Crew is continuing the ramada fabrication work as well as electrical upgrades at McDowell. New AC units were installed in the contact/entry stations at Estrella and White Tank in late March.
- **Trails Crew:** The Trails Crew, with the help of the Arizona Conservation Corps Crew (AZCC), finished all planned trail maintenance and new construction at the Lake. Major reroute projects have been completed at Usery and McDowell. The Crew is currently working at Estrella. A very positive news article about the AZCC and their work at Estrella was published in The Republic on May 5th.

Park Operations Report

Cave Creek Regional Park:

- In March, the Park hosted 23 interpretive programs with 494 participants attending, which included 64 repeat attendees. The interpretive ranger conducted three outreach programs: two *Clay Mine Adventures* with a school group of 89 and a Boy Scout group of 48. The ranger also conducted a wildlife conservation program for 27 Girl Scouts. Three docent-led programs were conducted with 20 park visitors in attendance. This month, the park highlighted programs included *Animal Art* with 52 participants, *Bug Theater and Fireside with the Ranger* with 96 participants.
- In April, Cave Creek Park hosted 22 interpretive programs with 370 participants attending, which included 64 repeat attendees. Four docent-led programs were offered and 33 visitors attended. The interpretive ranger conducted two outreach programs, one for a school group of 107 kindergarten and first grade students and the second program was an interpretive hike for a private party.

Desert Outdoor Center:

- March and April at the Desert Outdoor Center have been busy months for school programming during the weekdays (3,487 students and teachers), with weekends filled with weddings (2 events), scouting groups (2 events), church retreats (2 events), and stargazing (703 participants).

- These last two months of school-year programming are filled with planning for Boy Scout Aquatics & Nature Camps. These plans involve assisting scouts with hiring and orienting camp staff, reviewing the budget, performing swim checks, maintaining lifeguard certifications, and acquiring all the supplies and watercraft for camp.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- In March, there were 22 programs month with a total of 347 guests. The notable program of the month was the successful and new *Biomimicry* program. This program teaches homeschoolers about emerging technologies that are sustainably designed by mimicking nature.
- The interpretive ranger promoted Maricopa County Parks in the community by participating in two major local events, the annual Tres Rios Festival and the Avondale Library STEM Fest family event.
- Estrella Park staff counted RVs and camping units on the Park property near Phoenix International Raceway (PIR) over the NASCAR week of March 9th through the 15th. There were up to 569 camping units per night. Staff counted a total of 3,295 trailers, tents and RVs during the NASCAR event week camping on park property.
- A long distance horseback riding event and campout at the park was hosted by NATRC (North American Trail Ride Conference) on March 14. In addition, the Cowboy Mounted Shooters held a rigorous equestrian competition in the Rodeo Arena.
- A Native American Neo Tribal Festival was held in Estrella Park the weekend of March 20th. There were several drum circles, music, dancing and healing ceremonies. This startup-event had 300 attendees. Organizers would like to make it an annual event.
- The Soul Brothers Annual Picnic took place on March 28th. There were 700 motor cycles and 400 cars accounting for approximately 2,500 attendees to the picnic.
- In April, Estrella held 26 public programs and hikes with 490 people in attendance. The *Stargazing for Everyone* event continues to be very popular. This April, the stargazers were treated to a viewing of Jupiter and four of its largest moons.
- The Easter weekend was busy with family picnics across the park. All of the ramadas were rented with additional families filling the remaining picnic tables and shaded areas around the turf. Approximately 4,000 people enjoyed a nice day in the park.
- Park maintenance workers continue to remove cement picnic tables as they crack and crumble as the result of sprinkler water swelling the rebar inside the tables.
- The first Public Open House for the update to the Estrella Park Master Plan was held on April 30th. There was excellent public representation with 41 community members in attendance. The park planner did a good job setting up display panels describing various park aspects and idea boards to receive public comments. The Parks Department staff on the Estrella Park Master Plan Committee attended and received public comment for recording future plan considerations.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park:

- 20 interpretive programs were offered to approximately 509 program attendees during the months of March and April. Highlights for the month included: *Taste of the Desert*, *Spring into Spring Wildflower Hike*, *Sunset/Full Moon Paddle*, and April Fool's *Crazy Hat Day Hike*.
- The Lake Pleasant interpretive ranger provided assistance at the Arizona Game and Fish Expo and even stepped in to assist the Game and Fish with a special paddling course. The ranger also assisted the Desert Outdoor Center by teaching a series of mapping classes to youth.
- In partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation, the park hosted the annual *C.A.S.T. (Catch A Special Thrill) for Kids* event at Lake Pleasant to the delight of over 500 participants and spectators. This is a very special day to help youth with disabilities and from underserved areas to have a day designed just around them to go fishing and experience all things Lake Pleasant. Local and professional fishermen donate their time, boats and services to take the kids out on the water.
- The park hosted the annual *Dam Good Run Walk Hike* event in March. The park had roughly 70 participants in attendance. In addition to getting to walk on the dam (the only day this is permitted and open to the public participating in the event), event-goers were able to experience the new Beardsley trail and learn about the history of the dam through interpretive signage spread along the route. The park is very

excited to be teaming up with one of our concessionaires to help facilitate the operations and perform other duties (that the park has difficulties performing) for this event next year.

- Paddfest was another huge success with approximately 800 people participating in the festivities. Participants were exposed to the unique world of paddling through a wide array of activities including lessons from professionals, opportunities to try out various paddle equipment, a fishing tournament, scavenger hunts, build-a-boat challenges, and so much more, while listening to musical performers from the main stage.
- Renovations are underway at the Lake Pleasant Visitor Center. The construction team arrived and has begun demolition of the building. The renovations are anticipated to be completed by the Fall of 2015 and will include new exhibits for the public to learn about the history of Lake Pleasant. A special activity has been scheduled for Saturday, November 7, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to show off the new Discovery Center to the public.
- The Agua Fria Conservation Area is also currently receiving special attention. In collaboration with the Arizona Game and Fish and the Bureau of Reclamation, fencing is being installed along the roadway leading to the boat ramp in the area. The fencing will help keep park patrons on trail, provide boating access at Boulder Creek, minimize illegal OHV activity in the area, reduce rogue cattle impacts, and protect the beauty and integrity of the conservation area among other things.
- A group of approximately 80 volunteers came out to the park from Hands on Greater Phoenix to complete a variety of volunteer projects needed at Lake Pleasant. Volunteers helped build bat boxes, paint 750 feet of fire lane curbing around the 10 Lane East parking lot, rehab an illegally disturbed area near the north entry station, and picked up 30 bags of trash along the shoreline.
- An Eagle Scout completed a special project, along with roughly 32 other scouts, to paint the access gates within the main entry of Lake Pleasant. In addition, the scout contributed paint to be used for the Hands on Greater Phoenix project (fire lane curbing). The scout also repaired the aging signage within the Group Campground.
- The Arizona Game and Fish conducted a special visit to the five and a half week old baby bald eagles (both males) in their nest to gather information about the pair of baby eagles. Don't worry, mama and papa eagle were keeping a close eye while flying over the area while the survey was done; the work will not cause harm to or impact the eagle family. The eagles were found to be in good health. The baby eagles and their nest were treated to a special bath to protect them from ticks, parasites, and other undesired potential health issues. A group of home-schooled youth randomly selected by the Arizona Game and Fish were able to come out to experience this magical day. This was the first successful nesting season in five years. A second nest has been observed, but the nesting failed at this location (it is believed the male eagle is no longer fertile).

Restroom renovations are in the process of getting underway in March. The renovations will occur for the following locations: Four Lane, Roadrunner Campground Lakeside and Landside (both the upper and lower restroom). The updates are severely needed due to age of the facilities and the high volume/usage the park receives in these areas.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- March was the last month of what is typically referred to as our "Busy Season." McDowell Park hosted four special events and had several bike demos.
- The interpretive ranger offered 16 programs attracting 223 participants of which 29 were returning guests.
- In March, McDowell hosted the *19th Annual Desert Classic Duathlon*, the *Hike for the Homeless*, the *Fat Tire 40* mountain bike race and the *McDowell Area Relay Classic* (MARC) mountain bike race sponsored by the Mountain Bike Association of Arizona.
- The March bike demos included Yeti, Rocky Mountain Bikes, Santa Cruz, Trek and Specialized; all who held demo days at McDowell to allow the public to ride their new bikes.
- The new Bike Wash and Bike Care Center in the Trailhead Staging Area is progressing nicely.
- Volunteers provided 57 hours of work on the trails in McDowell Park in March.
- Occupancy in the Family Campground was at 99% and occupancy in the 10 tent sites was at 97% during March 2015.
- April is the transition month when most of the winter visitors begin to make their way home. Occupancy in the Family Campground for the first week in April was 92% and in the last week was 32%.

- The interpretive ranger offered 14 programs attracting 222 participants of which 41 had attended a previous program.
- McDowell had one special event which was a charity run for lung cancer research. The event was named *Running Lungs* and sponsored by Mayo Clinic and the Linda Wortman Foundation.
- Ragnar Trail Running volunteers came out on the second weekend of the month and conducted 35 hours of volunteer trail work on the Lousley Hill Trail.
- In April, the Trails Crew, with help from the Arizona Conservation Corp, completed work on the re-route of the Shallmo Wash Trail making it suitable as a multi-use trail for horses/hikers and mountain bikers.
- Maintenance staff continued to check and repair fence breaks both months, repaired the fountain on the plaza outside the Visitor Center and extended the sprinkler system inside the tortoise habitat.
- The Park Hosts assigned to McDowell will be leaving in April and May. All hosts have accepted the invitations from the park supervisor to return for the 2015/2016 season.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- During the month of March, San Tan provided 36 interpretive programs with 1,195 program participants.
- On St. Patrick's Day, the 7th annual *Find Me Green Lucky Charms* was enjoyed by over 140 participants connecting with nature through creative and fun activities.
- During the month of April, San Tan provided 37 interpretive programs with 1,044 program participants.
- *Eggstravaganza*, our eighth annual Easter event, attracted 245 participants! Visitors were treated to plethora of fun stations such as face painting, desert trivia, bean bag toss, obstacle course, crafts, coloring, pony rides and so much more. San Tan Park events are a great way to connect with the community and offer opportunities to connect with the park.
- San Tan has had 11 Eagle Scout projects completed over the past two months. The projects were focused on unauthorized trail closures and re-vegetation efforts; in total, the scouts repaired over 6 linear miles of Sonoran Desert. All 11 Eagle Scout projects combined time contributed 500 volunteer hours this spring.
- The 3rd annual *San Tan Sinister* race hosted by Aravaipa Running was held on Saturday, May 2nd as part of the Desert Runner Insomniac Series. The event brought in over 266 participants who had the option to run a 9k, 27k, or 54k starting at 7pm and continuing throughout the night until 7am the next morning.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area:

- Spur Cross hosted 17 interpretive programs in March with 301 participants attending and seven docent led programs with 93 attendees.
- On March 7, the park hosted a co-sponsored Archaeology Expo with Cave Creek Museum and Desert Foothills Chapter Arizona Archaeological Society. This annual event drew 257 visitors.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Ruins of Spur Cross* with 23 participants, *Elephant Mountain Fortress Hike* with 24 participants and four *Archaeology Expo* hikes with 98 participants.
- The Spur Cross hosts are to be commended on having sold \$8,112.00 in souvenir merchandise throughout the season while collecting park fees at the park entry gate.
- Spur Cross hosted 11 interpretive programs in April with 179 participants attending and six docent led programs with 47 attendees.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Full Moon Hike* with 63 attendees and *Ruins of Spur Cross* with 25 attendees.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- The Park offered 16 interpretive ranger programs in March totaling 1,051 participants and 40 docent lead programs totaling 771 participants.
- *Stargazing for Everyone*, led by Tony La Conte, brought in 300 park visitors eager to learn about the night sky. Participants enjoyed a slide presentation about the stars, followed by an opportunity to view the stars with a variety of high powered telescopes.
- Park hosts were treated to a Host Appreciation Lunch at the park with games, prizes, and food. The Director, Operations Manager, East-Side Superintendent and Volunteer Coordinator thanked the hosts for all they do for our department and encouraged them to continue volunteering next season.

- The interpretive ranger helped out at the 2015 AZ Game & Fish Outdoor Expo at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility. Maricopa County Parks and Recreation set up a booth at the event and gave out information on county parks.
- The Buckhorn Campground was 97% full during March.
- In April, the park offered 13 interpretive ranger programs totaling 726 participants and seven docent lead programs totaling 81 participants.
- The park hosted the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association's (APRA) Best of the Best of Outdoor Programming. Outdoor agencies from around Arizona (AZ State Parks, Phoenix Parks and Recreation, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, and Camp Colley) presented on various outdoor programming currently happening in the state.
- The ABFAA's (Arizona Bowhunters and Field Archery Association) State Field Championship and Spring FITA Field Archery Tournament were held at the archery range. 43 archers from around the state participated in these competitions.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- March once again was a very busy and successful month for White Tank Park. On March 7th, a historic high revenue collecting day occurred. Between the MBAA race and a beautiful spring day, the Saturday of March 7, 2015, was the highest revenue collecting day the White Tank Entry Station has on record.
- The interpretive ranger and volunteers held 25 programs in March with 1,387 people attending. For National Archaeology Month, several programs were offered to park visitor. The most popular program was a co-sponsored event with the Library District called *Detectives of the Past - The Science of Archaeology* that was attended by 105 people.
- The Sonoran Institute's, Ian Dowdy, presented an informative talk on growth, planning and impact in the West Valley.
- Several big events were held in March. The annual hayride at the Nature Center and Amphitheater brought in over 300 people to enjoy an evening in the desert. MBAA held its annual mountain bike race which completely filled the Competitive Track with campers and racers on March 7th. Aravaipa Running held its annual *Mesquite Canyon Desert Trail Runner* race on March 14th, bringing in hundreds of racers for the day.

Vulture Mountain Regional Park:

- The R&PP (Recreation and Public Purposes Act) Environmental Assessment meeting for the Vulture Mountain Recreation Areas was kick-offed off with the Bureau of Land Management and the consulting firm, Logan Simpson.
- Parks staff met with Maricopa County Department of Transportation staff in the field of the Vulture Mountains to discuss future road alignments for the proposed facilities in the recreation area.
- The Parks Department staff continues to meet with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) staff to discuss drafts of the Hassayampa River Preserve's new master plan, new trails plan and new business plan. Each meeting is successful in moving the comments and drafts forward to completion with satisfactory results for both partners.
- The Westside Superintendent, White Tank Interpretive Ranger and volunteers participated in the Nature Conservancy's Hassayampa River Preserve Nature Festival on April 4th. They staffed a Maricopa County Parks information table complete with children's activities, interpretive props, and information about the County parks' system. They interacted with the festival participants and provided an interpretive tour through the river corridor up to Lyke's Lookout.
- The Westside Superintendent has been conducting site visits at the Hassayampa River Preserve once a week since the end of January. She has been shadowing the interpretive programs and conducting trail and maintenance inventories. With each visit, she is also creating relationships with TNC staff, Preserve volunteers, and members of the Friends of Hassayampa.