



# Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department

## MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** September 26, 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 **August 2022**.

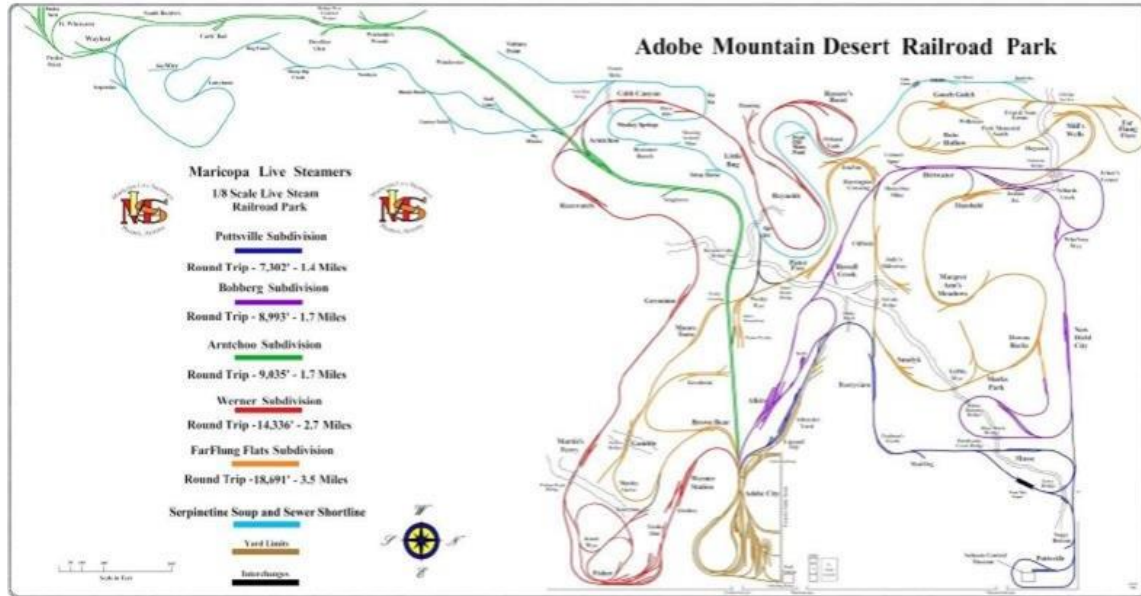
### Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

| Date/<br>Status       | Tracking Number  | Summary  |
|-----------------------|------------------|--|
| 8/17/2022<br>Approved | C-30-23-001-X-00 | <b>Acceptance of Grant Funds from Arizona State Parks, State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF):</b> Approve the Project Sponsor Agreement and the receipt of grant funds from SLIF for the Lake Pleasant Wind Warning System project in the amount not-to-exceed \$620,791, approve an appropriation adjustment increasing the FY23 Parks and Recreation Department revenue and expenditure budgets and delegate the authority to the Director of the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department to execute all documents related to these grant funds.                            |
| 8/17/2022<br>Approved | C-73-23-003-X-00 | <b>McDowell Campground Upgrades:</b> Approve the Contract for Award to AJP Electric, Inc., at an estimate of \$3,681,059.44 with an estimated completion date of 120 days from the official notice to proceed. The purpose of the contract is to provide construction services to provide all material, labor, and equipment for the removal and replacement of the electrical and plumbing equipment located within the McDowell Mountain campsite.   |
| 8/31/2022<br>Approved | C-30-23-003-X-00 | <b>Donations for Parks and Recreation:</b> Accept the restricted monetary donations of \$1,500 from Penny Hudspeth, Anahi Villalobas, and Russ and Rita Schag for three memorial benches to be placed within Estrella Regional Park, a \$1,500 donation for a memorial bench to be placed within McDowell Mountain Regional Park from Carolyn Gierga, and an anonymous donation of \$891 at Estrella Regional Park.  |
| 8/31/2022<br>Approved | C-30-23-004-X-00 | <b>Use Management Agreement (UMA) with Global Sports Facilities – Adobe, LLC:</b><br>Approve the UMA with Global Sports Facilities-Adobe, LLC (Concessionaire) for the development, expansion, and operation of the existing Victory Lane Sports facility at Adobe Dam Regional Park. All development costs will be at the expense of the Concessionaire. Term of the Agreement shall be from the effective date (the date that Concessionaire obtains financing) through June 6, 2056, with an option to renew upon the request of the Concessionaire and approval of the County. |
| 8/31/2022<br>Approved | C-30-23-001-X-00 | <b>Correction to Acceptance of Grant Funds from Arizona State Parks, State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF):</b> Correction to Acceptance of Grant Funds from Arizona State Parks, State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF), agenda C-30-23-001-X-00, requesting the approval of expenditures. Pursuant to ARS §42-17106(B), Direct the Office of Budget and Finance to increase the (D300) Parks and Recreation Grant Fund (230) Non-Recurring appropriation group (NRNP) expenditure by \$620,791.   |
| 8/31/2022<br>Approved | C-06-23-105-X-00 | <b>Donations Parks and Recreation:</b> In accordance with County Policy A2508, accept the monthly donation report received from Parks and Recreation for July 2022, for a Cash Value of \$947.91.  |

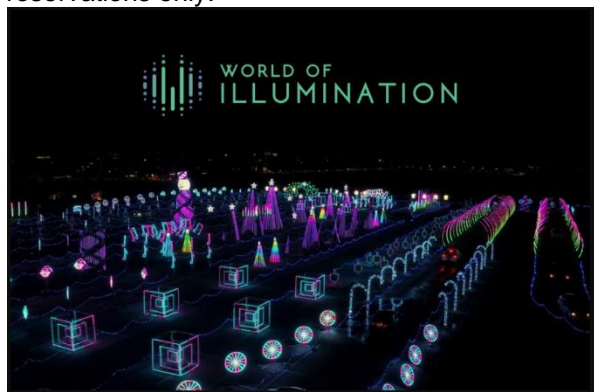
**Administration Division**

**Contract Administration:**

- Adobe: The Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society, the Maricopa Live Steamers, and the Arizona Model Railroad Society will be holding their Annual Fall Railroad Adventures from October 24 through October 31 with the featured *Everything Railroad Swap Meet* on October 29, 2022. In addition, the Maricopa Live Steamers will offer free public train rides on their approximate 18 miles of track every Sunday between 11am and 3pm starting October 2 and running through April 2023.



- Six Flags Hurricane Harbor will be hosting the *World of Illumination* in their parking lot from 11/16/2022 through 1/1/23. *World of Illumination* is an animated holiday drive-through immersive experience through online reservations only.



**Human Resources**

- **Welcome/Promotions/Transfers:**
  - Evan McLenithan, Interpretive Ranger, DOC, 08/02/2022
  - Julie Sadek, Park Office Assistant Specialized (transfer), White Tank, 08/08/2022
  - Samuel Heyne, Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant, 08/08/2022
  - Marcia Kon, Contact Station Assistant (temp), McDowell, 08/15/2022
  - Rusty Rogers, Park Maintenance Worker, Usery, 08/15/2022
  - Mark Ostapczuk (Promotion), Trails Specialist, Trails, 08/22/2022
  
- **Farewells**
  - Jennifer Harris, Park Asset and Inventory Coordinator, HQ, 8/6/2022
  
- **Vacancies**
  - Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant, PCN 19533, reference checks
  - Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, PCN 79628, reposted and interviews completed
  - Lake Pleasant Park Supervisor, Lake Pleasant, PCN 68854, reposted and interviews scheduled
  - Regional Park Superintendent, 33964, reposted and interviews scheduled
  - Park Maintenance Worker, McDowell, PCN 17169, background checks
  - Park Maintenance Worker, McDowell, PCN 1399, posted
  - On Hold:
    - Park Custodian (Temp/PT) (NEW), Lake Pleasant, PCN 80408
    - Contact Station Assistant (Temp/PT), Lake Pleasant, PCN 79569
    - Park Asset and Inventory Coordinator, HQ, PCN 78302

**Natural Resources**

- The Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) has been working with our partners on the Lower Gila River Coordination Team. Selecting “Turquoise Beads” or gems in need of habitat enhancement along the Lower Gila River as part of their Strategic Action Plan.
- The NRS developed the Desert Defenders Stewardship Program and is recruiting Site stewards for four or five parks, these stewards will take a leading role in natural resource programs at their assigned park. They will plan dates, recruit volunteers, and lead the events including invasive species removal, native seed harvest, and planting under the supervision, training, and coordination of the NRS.

**Parks Planning**

- Parks Vision 2030:
  - Continued revisions on Chapters 2, 4, and 6.
  - Additions to Chapter 3 partnerships and regional plans. Shared with ASU retired professor for review.
  - Updated table with benchmarking data – confirmed accuracy of data.
  - Prepared presentation for the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).
- Attended the Arizona Planning Association Conference and presented the Parks Vision 2030 plan on 8/25/22.
- Attending SR 30 MAG Active Transportation Plan meetings.
- Attending the planning team meetings for the Urban Wildlife Conservation Day to be held on Saturday, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Coordinating the cultural survey at San Tan.

**Volunteer Hours (FY23 through August 2022):**

| TOTAL Volunteer Hours, by month                 |           |           | Year to Year |             |
|---|-----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
|   | July      | August    | YTD Total    | % Change    |
| FY23 - All Hours                                | 3,927     | 4,399     | 8,326        | 26%         |
| FY22 - All Hours                                | 3,268     | 3,362     | 6,630        |             |
| FY21 - All Hours                                | 2,800     | 2,738     | 5,538        |             |
| <b>Financial Impact of Volunteers, by Month</b> |           |           |              |             |
|   | July      | August    | YTD Total    | Hourly Rate |
| FY22 Financial Impact                           | \$117,614 | \$131,750 | \$251,820    | \$29.95     |
| FY22 Financial Impact                           | \$93,269  | \$95,951  | \$189,220    | \$28.54     |
| FY21 Financial Impact                           | \$71,204  | \$69,627  | \$140,831    | \$27.20     |

| Special Days of Service event listings: | Date     | Attendance | Hours |
|---|----------|------------|-------|
| Spur Cross - Native Seed Planting       | 8/4/2022 | 3          | 12    |

## **Park Operations Division**

### **Project Management**

- Lake Pleasant - Continued working on the Water System and Storage Tank Upgrades project; replacing the Overlook Pump Station, electrical gear, plumbing and valves, and installing automated controls.
- Lake Pleasant - Began project scoping for the Lake Pleasant wind warning system
- Multiple Parks - Continued with project planning for the Usery ramada project, Lake Pleasant entry renovations, and Hassayampa viewing platforms.
- White Tank - Continue to work with MCDOT on the entry station project and completion of Area 4 road/parking improvements.

### **Trades**

- The lighting project at the Desert Outdoor Center has been completed.
- Installed a new water meter at San Tan.
- Installed two Kiosks at McDowell.
- Completed the pedestal preventative maintenance at Lake Pleasant, McDowell, and Usery.
- Estrella - The pond pump is still down, so we cannot pump water to the field for irrigation or dust control.
- Donation – The supervisor met with Pioneer Rock to inspect material for donation. Approximately 150 tons of DG will be donated to a park of our choice depending on the project and need.

### **Trails**

- Usery – the new Talon Trail was reflagged due to the removal of the flag line by persons unknown and prepared the construction plan for the trail.
- Usery - Inspected Usery Merkle Trail with HMI, confirmed Scope of Work, and obtained updated cost quotes.
- Maricopa Trail - Researching Segment 76 plans, routes, and Right of Way for budgeted FY23 work.
- Maricopa Trail - Bush Highway Trailhead, installed kiosk with the assistance of Usery park maintenance team.
- ACE crew - scheduled upcoming FY23 Fall/Spring work in McDowell, Usery, and San Tan parks.
- Maricopa Trail Segment 11 - Cleaned up half a truckload of cinder blocks and removed trash from the Sun Valley Parkway Trailhead. Repaired cut fence lines, trimmed overgrown corridor, and replaced missing and damaged trail signs.
- Vulture - Inspected and reinforced ribbon line on Off-Highway Vehicle trail line and GPS, identified staging and access points for trail build.

### **Cave Creek Regional Park**

- Souvenir merchandise is coming in for the season.
- On August 19, the park received severe thunderstorms, lightning struck the top of a Saguaro in campsite 34, and a 10-foot arm fell. Upon further inspection, there was evidence of the center and bottom of the cacti being burnt. As a result, the campsite and site 11 were closed so the Saguaro could be removed. The sites were reopened on August 29.

### **Desert Outdoor Center**

- The Rangers offered 32 programs in the parks during the month of August, ranging from early morning bird walks to late sunset walks or night creature hikes. Approximately 200 people attended the programs.
- Rangers are also busy this summer familiarizing themselves with the nine County Parks we currently offer programming at by visiting with their staff, hiking the trails, exploring the resources, and meeting with past "park experts" to glean as much knowledge from them as possible.
- Maintenance has been working hard on annual maintenance tasks around the facility and grounds, including refinishing floors, working on erosion, repairing/patching drywall, and preparing in general for the upcoming school year.
- Our seventh and final ranger position was filled in August by Evan McLenithan. Evan is a recent transplant from California, where he worked as a Park Interpreter for California State Parks at Oceano Dunes District for the past five seasons. Evan has also recently completed his teaching certificate and has a Bachelor's degree in Forestry.





### **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**

- On August 3, Estrella Park and the Parks Department held a public meeting to consider an amendment to the Estrella Master Plan for the possible expansion of an additional 18-hole golf course at Tres Rios. The public presentation and open dialog meeting with the public went well with 72 attendees.
- The irrigation delivery pump failed. As a result, the staff and hosts have been busy hand watering approximately one thousand trees and bushes to help them survive the heat.
- The Estrella Park Nature Center got a deep cleaning inside and out in preparation for the public meeting and upcoming busy season.

### **Hassayampa River Preserve**

- Maintenance and volunteers have been busy conducting trail cleanup from recent monsoon storms and subsequent river flooding. The trails on the far side of the river are still inaccessible due to river conditions.
- Planning kicked off for the Visitor Center exhibit design and installation project and a project to upgrade and construct several viewing platforms around Palm Lake.

### **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

- Monsoon storms caused damage with repairs to the 4-lane dock, playground shade, and a leaking roof in the Discovery Center.
- To bring additional awareness to the *Safe Boating Campaign* (<https://safeboatingcampaign.com/>), The Bureau of Reclamation provided "Wear It" signs that park staff installed in critical places.
- Discussions began on the renovations of the entry booths and staff support building.

### **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

- The visitor center displays have been reorganized and new attractive features have been integrated throughout the floor.
- Kiosks throughout the park are being updated with current information.
- Cattle entered the park off of McDowell Mountain Road and damaged fencing. The fencing was repaired once cattle had moved off the property.
- The final two night bike rides were held in August. They were a huge success and brought over 100 visitors to the park for each ride.

### **San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

- Maintenance trimmed vegetation and fixed eroded areas along several trails.
- Maintenance cleared sediment and debris from the park's main drainage canal at the trailhead.

### **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

- While the first half of the year was extremely dry at Spur Cross, with only 1.22" of rainfall, the conservation area has received 5.9" during this year's monsoon season. Year-to-date precipitation is now at 7.12".
- Park staff and volunteers have been kept busy this month repairing rain and flood-damaged sections of the Dragonfly Trail after recent monsoon storms, especially the heavy rain and flash flood event that occurred on 8/19/22. In addition, bridges were replaced at three creek crossings in the park.
- The staff has also been pruning trees and shrubs along the Metate, Towhee, and Dragonfly Trails and the parking area. A fallen saguaro and a large branch from a cottonwood tree fell across the Dragonfly Trail and were removed to reopen the trail to park visitors.
- The town of Cave Creek's maintenance crew regraded the Spur Cross parking area and the main entry road.

### **Usery Mountain Regional Park**

- Usery Mountain Archers concluded their Thursday Night Shoot series in August; 237 people participated in the series.
- Usery staff said goodbye to our rattlesnake, Shakira, who has been a part of our team for over ten years and has been enjoyed by many who visit our Nature Center.
- The maintenance staff has remained busy clearing weeds, trimming, and general cleaning around restroom facilities, ramadas, Entry Station, and parking areas.
- The maintenance staff has begun trimming and weeding each campground site, preparing for the upcoming busy season.
- After several storms in August, maintenance staff worked at leveling the trailhead staging area, parking lot, and both of the group camping areas.

- Despite the warmer months, the Park Assistant and the maintenance crew have done a wonderful job at weekly Archery Range visits, replacing multiple targets once or twice weekly as needed, and preparing new targets.

**White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

- White Tank has experienced extreme monsoon storms with severe winds, lightning, and flooding this year. The flooding crossed roadways for several days in August, leaving lots of debris, sand, trees, and rocks to be cleared.
- Repairs were made to Ford Canyon trail.
- White Tank Regional Park hosted the Aravaipa Running *Insomniac Night Series Run and Ride* summer race. Unfortunately, due to monsoon storms, the Friday night run was canceled; otherwise, there was a great turnout.
- The parking lot and roadway project were completed for Area 4 Ramada day-use area project.

### Maricopa County Parks Visitor Report FY23, through August 2022

| FY23                  | July    | August  | September | October | November | December | January | February | March   | April   | May     | June    |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Cave Creek</b>     | 1,373   | 2,019   |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 1,381   | 1,198   | 2,515     | 6,747   | 7,873    | 15,242   | 13,502  | 13,094   | 18,600  | 13,639  | 3,764   | 2,737   |
| FY21                  | 1,122   | 911     | 1,325     | 4,688   | 12,084   | 12,121   | 7,593   | 10,523   | 16,939  | 8,367   | 4,046   | 3136    |
| FY20                  | 363     | 505     | 959       | 4,233   | 9,450    | 9,775    | 13,542  | 14,572   | 16,079  | 11,336  | 3,145   | 1552    |
| <b>Estrella Park</b>  | 2,342   | 2,644   |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 1,184   | 1,278   | 2,605     | 5,891   | 7,398    | 12,222   | 14,310  | 12,180   | 15,092  | 13,180  | 4,560   | 3,519   |
| FY21                  | 2,571   | 3,317   | 4,696     | 8,333   | 12,723   | 8,483    | 16,806  | 11,991   | 15,489  | 7,869   | 4,770   | 2,371   |
| FY20                  | 1,350   | 1,954   | 3,571     | 6,034   | 9,547    | 6,841    | 12,726  | 11,067   | 16,449  | 9,370   | 5,819   | 3,687   |
| <b>McDowell Mtn</b>   | 1,685   | 1,845   |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 964     | 1,310   | 2,032     | 7,745   | 8,208    | 15,958   | 15,560  | 15,706   | 18,281  | 17,854  | 5,163   | 1,886   |
| FY21                  | 2,667   | 2,275   | 3,806     | 10,302  | 16,229   | 17,207   | 18,219  | 13,673   | 15,294  | 8,218   | 4,374   | 2,058   |
| FY20                  | 1,095   | 1,407   | 3,520     | 11,570  | 12,574   | 13,877   | 17,846  | 16,006   | 18,997  | 13,822  | 5,654   | 2,779   |
| <b>San Tan Park</b>   | 4,215   | 6,029   |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 3,753   | 4,506   | 4,105     | 9,045   | 18,584   | 21,434   | 30,452  | 26,402   | 29,732  | 13,033  | 7,574   | 4,506   |
| FY21                  | 8,080   | 7,029   | 11,102    | 16,676  | 27,144   | 20,844   | 36,069  | 34,131   | 30,333  | 14,658  | 10,262  | 5,752   |
| FY20                  | 3,941   | 3,832   | 6,009     | 12,801  | 17,839   | 16,810   | 27,717  | 25,062   | 33,803  | 26,313  | 17,551  | 9,622   |
| <b>Spur Cross</b>     | 180     | 316     |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 299     | 395     | 500       | 1,484   | 2,859    | 4,031    | 7,069   | 8,168    | 5,818   | 4,352   | 1,211   | 494     |
| FY21                  | 171     | 121     | 354       | 1,984   | 3,826    | 5,218    | 6,273   | 4,695    | 7,886   | 4,093   | 1,318   | 620     |
| FY20                  | 113     | 122     | 244       | 730     | 826      | 4,208    | 4,592   | 4,569    | 4,508   | 2,276   | 563     | 210     |
| <b>Usery Mtn Park</b> | 6,500   | 6,544   |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 3,926   | 2,811   | 5,039     | 14,212  | 16,450   | 38,086   | 29,834  | 30,249   | 34,433  | 22,465  | 9,316   | 5,949   |
| FY21                  | 5,981   | 7,587   | 9,683     | 18,705  | 33,071   | 28,940   | 41,117  | 31,167   | 31,289  | 15,370  | 9,282   | 5,111   |
| FY20                  | 5,562   | 5,959   | 8,133     | 16,411  | 26,374   | 23,339   | 34,431  | 33,957   | 44,356  | 25,954  | 12,914  | 8,453   |
| <b>White Tank</b>     | 7,264   | 8,839   |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 4,923   | 4,068   | 5,201     | 17,768  | 20,775   | 42,163   | 36,298  | 35,679   | 40,771  | 24,697  | 11,293  | 6,807   |
| FY21                  | 8,801   | 7,667   | 11,991    | 20,736  | 31,836   | 34,425   | 42,320  | 36,939   | 37,285  | 17,217  | 13,590  | 6,415   |
| FY20                  | 4,913   | 5,658   | 9,810     | 20,115  | 31,195   | 27,762   | 39,931  | 40,494   | 64,224  | 27,038  | 16,680  | 10,640  |
| <b>Hassayampa</b>     | 463     | 546     |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 286     | 333     | 423       | 1105    | 2,669    | 1,790    | 1,771   | 2,096    | 2,850   | 2,286   | 1,338   | 554     |
| FY21                  | 855     | 632     | 840       | 1681    | 1,984    | 1,204    | 2,014   | 1,786    | 2,363   | 1,672   | 1,513   | 555     |
| FY20                  | 453     | 418     | 591       | 1405    | 1,498    | 971      | 1,746   | 2,002    | 2,321   | 2,477   | 2,072   | 1,294   |
| <b>Lake Pleasant</b>  | 146,746 | 87,454  |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 88,853  | 62,651  | 64,323    | 50,169  | 38,347   | 45,239   | 35,415  | 44,353   | 90,764  | 152,545 | 147,980 | 137,694 |
| FY21                  | 101,160 | 96,366  | 79,426    | 58,720  | 40,177   | 22,387   | 27,877  | 25,987   | 42,967  | 59,969  | 91,403  | 76,394  |
| FY20                  | 90,616  | 63,458  | 51,411    | 37,125  | 31,095   | 18,054   | 32,436  | 40,902   | 69,504  | 75,153  | 116,342 | 98,916  |
| <b>DOC</b>            | 183     | 225     |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| FY22                  | 0       | -       | 0         | -       | 43       | -        | 84      | 1,178    | 1,160   | 2,276   | 2,071   | 506     |
| FY21                  | 0       | 0       | 0         | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| FY20                  | 140     | 64      | 381       | 1,556   | 1,887    | 1,330    | 1,622   | 1,630    | 1,030   | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Agua Fria</b>      |         | 113     |           |         |          |          |         |          |         |         |         |         |
| <b>System Total</b>   | 170,951 | 116,574 | -         | -       | -        | -        | -       | -        | -       | -       | -       | -       |
| FY22                  | 105,569 | 78,550  | 86,743    | 114,166 | 123,206  | 196,165  | 184,295 | 189,105  | 257,501 | 266,327 | 194,270 | 164,652 |
| FY21                  | 131,408 | 125,905 | 123,223   | 141,825 | 179,074  | 150,829  | 198,288 | 170,892  | 199,845 | 137,433 | 140,558 | 102,412 |
| FY20                  | 108,546 | 83,377  | 84,629    | 111,980 | 142,285  | 122,967  | 186,589 | 190,261  | 271,271 | 193,739 | 180,740 | 137,153 |