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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 9, 2011
To: Parks and Recreation Department Commissioners
From: R.J. Cardin, Director
Re: Director's Summary of Current Events

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R.J.C.", positioned to the right of the "From:" line.

Listed below are issues that the department has been involved with since the May 10, 2011 Director's Summary.

End of Year Financial Report – FY2011

Budget

General Fund (100) – Agency 300 – The General Fund ended FY2011 reporting expenditures under budget by \$273. There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305 – The Enhancement Fund ended FY2011 reporting revenue at 10% or \$355,164 over the YTD budget. The Enhancement Fund ended the year at 5% or \$151,384 under the YTD operating budget for expenditures.

Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302 – The Lake Fund ended FY2011 reporting revenues at 10% or \$192,645 over the YTD budget. The Lake Fund is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 1% or \$15,038.

Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306 - Spur Cross ended FY11 reporting revenues at 3% or \$5,065 over the YTD budget. Spur Cross ended the year reporting operating expenditures under budget at 12% or \$33,086.

Superintendent Reports

Cave Creek Regional Park – The Park completed multiple summer facilities projects such as painting campfire grills and placing new decomposed granite in the campsites to prepare for the upcoming season.

Desert Outdoor Center – The DOC has already started receiving numerous calls regarding the Cabelas kayak training and we expect to surpass last year's mark of 118 participants from August through December.

The Crayfish Workshop conducted by the DOC and Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) was attended by 17 teachers from around the state. The event was held to market the center to the teachers, and assist in development of an invasive species class.

The Boy Scout Aquatics and Nature Camp totaled 206 Merit Badge campers and 25 Trail to Eagle Scouts for a total of 231 Scouts. In 2010 the total was 250 Scouts (223 merit badge campers and 27 TTE Scouts).

Estrella Mountain Regional Park – The Park offered 19 interpretive programs with 223 visitors in attendance. Geology Rocks Your World was a very popular program attracting 49 participants.

Maricopa County Teen Leadership Program (MCLE) has had 10 teen participants attending programs to complete their requirements, two of whom have completed all of their volunteer hours.

The turf area and ball field were hydro-seeded. With vigilance, the irrigation system is working and the results show a successful new "Bermuda" growth. The ball field is now ready for players with the first games scheduled for July 31st.

Vandals damaged irrigation solenoids, ripped out a restroom sink, and pulled electrical wiring from two boxes that provided power to Ramadas 2, 3 and 4. At Buckeye Hills vandals tore the drywall from the ceiling of one of the restrooms.

The Three Rivers Historical Society is progressing toward making the "Centennial Trail" a reality. A grant of \$3,000.00 from the City of Avondale has been awarded to Valley Arts Council /Gallery 37 and the Historical Society is publishing a cookbook to help raise funds.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park – A Lake clean up day is scheduled for August 10th with the concentration along shoreline. The Park hosted The Moonlight Kayak with 32 participants enjoying an evening on the water.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park – The Park offered 12 programs which had 148 participants, a 643% increase over July 2010! Park staff has been busy adding shade to the park by planting trees around campsites and locations where the park intends to construct new ramadas.

The Park continues to host a summer series of mountain bike night rides with an average of 115-120 participants per event.

AZGFD is monitoring the topminnow and pupfish in McDowell's two ponds. In the spring of 2010, 373 pupfish were introduced; the population one year later is estimated to be near 20,000 fish. In mid August the AZGFD will extract pupfish from the nursery tank for relocation.

The Park received a donation from the Phoenix Triathlon Club which included 4 night-vision monocular scopes and a cash donation.

The Park submitted 3 projects for consideration to the Home Depot Community Involvement Program which selects projects for all segments of the public and provides the material and volunteers.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park – The Park hosted 14 interpretive programs with 494 participants. The highlights of the month included the Full Moon Hike, Scorpion Scavenger Hunt, Bat Observation Hike and Breakfast with the Tortoises.

The San Tan Interpretive Ranger participated in a television segment for Arizona Midday with Channel 12 News. The segment highlighted upcoming programs at the park, the Wet-N-Wild promotion, and offered advice for park users for a safe and enjoyable experience during the summer months.

The Park Supervisor, two park volunteers and a community service volunteer worked on repairing areas of storm damaged trails. In addition, they also restored the beauty of the pond and wildlife refuge area by painting the fence and adding several aquatic plants donated by Spur Cross.

The San Tan Interpretive Ranger and a park volunteer established a Sonoran Desert Toad refuge area near the visitor center. Each year, the toads gather in the building runoff area during the monsoon season. The refuge will serve as an added attraction during programs and provide a visually appealing and educational exhibit.

The San Tan Park Supervisor, Interpretive Ranger, and an AZGFD biologist completed a bat survey on a mine located on Goldmine Mountain. The mine had been gated to protect a special species of bat, known as the California Leaf-Nosed Bat. The cave is still inhabited by bats, including several Western Pipistrelle bats, and rattlesnakes.

The Parks system obtained funding from FY11 to establish two interpretive wildlife bone boxes (with bones, skins, and talons of commonly found wildlife in our Parks). The bone boxes, stored at Usery and White Tank Park will be available to all county Parks. The wildlife bone boxes will aid Interpretive Rangers in connecting visitors and youth with nature through programming and educational outreach.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area – Spur Cross Interpretive Ranger hosted 8 interpretive programs in July totaling 88 participants. This month's favorites were Fruits of the Desert Walk and the Full Moon Hike.

The Interpretive Ranger assisted DOC personnel with the annual scout camp, as well as, assisting an Eagle Scout candidate with designing and planning a project.

The Park Supervisor met with a pair of individuals representing a local running club to discuss the logistics for coordinating a potential fundraising run for Spur-x.

The Park Supervisor has completed paperwork for pending retirement in September 2011.

Usery Mountain Regional Park – The Park hosted 31 interpretive programs and yoga in July totaling 1,322 participants, with 789 repeat attendees. This month the summer evening crowd-pleasers included Scorpion Hunts, Venomous Reptiles, Flashlight Night Hikes, and Full Moon Hikes. The Brown-bag lectures are proving to have increased attendance this summer with a new topic each month.

The new archery class, taught by the Interpretive Ranger and maintenance team every month, has been filling up two months ahead of each scheduled class. All participants gave high ratings for this new class. Park staff met with the archery education manager from the AZGFD to design the “Next Step” in the archery program. The archery range has been busy with archers honing their skills for hunting season. Thursday night league shoots have seen increased attendance over past years.

The Park Supervisor and maintenance team are working on the mitigation project to restore the desert wash at the Nature Center. All supplies have been delivered and trenching for the new irrigation drip line has started. New benches have been installed; trees and shrubs will be next.

Two memorial benches in honor of a dedicated park volunteer have been installed on the Desert Hawk Trail behind the Nature Center.

Due to increased road and mountain bikers visiting our Nature Center, designer bike racks were installed at the front entrance.

An Eagle Scout project helped blend the ramadas into the natural colors of the desert by painting two picnic ramadas the same green color as the Nature Center.

The Park Supervisor filled a temporary assignment as Acting Eastside Superintendent while Ms. Retterbush was on vacation.

Positive feedback from the public continues on the POS system. Most campers find the website very easy to use and annual pass holders like the new cards and hang tags.

The Arizona Republic did a special article about the Interpretive Ranger titled Ask 5 Questions. Other media marketing efforts include monthly email blasts, newspaper listings, other local publications and website calendar listings.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park – The Park had 7 programs with 407 participants, along with 4 outreaches with 262 participants, totaling 669 visitors. Two new benches have been installed in the Park. The first is located on Goat camp and the second at the new nature pond.

Vulture Mountain – Comments from the Public meeting and on-line survey were tabulated and the preferred alternative was ‘C’. The results suggested a hybrid between ‘B’ and ‘C’, the major difference between the two alternatives is that ‘C’ includes a campground, more water and electric, while ‘B’ is more primitive without utilities.

Park staff met with the Library District on July 13th to continue discussions on a joint facility at the TNC site. The site feasibility study is complete and we will focus on the plans further potential as the Master Plan is completed and an implementation plan for the project is established.

The project team met on July 26th to respond to comments and finalize the preferred alternative. Once completed, it will be posted for the public on the project website.

Park staff met with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) staff on July 28th to discuss a draft management agreement. Preliminary thoughts discussed were the possibility of the TNC giving us the headquarters area to serve as the visitor contact area and trailhead and incorporating a trail easement on the downstream property so we can maintain a

current trail and add some new trails. The process would be first to develop an agreement that turns the land over to us and dedicates the trail easement and then the management agreement will detail the responsibilities for each agencies role on the property.

A trip to Salida, Colorado has been scheduled for the Director, the Westside Superintendent and the Park Trail Planner. In order to complete the Cooperative Management Agreement with the BLM we are going to meet with staff and observe best practices from the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, the model for the BLM and its partners nationwide.

Contract Updates

Nothing to report at this time.