



Maricopa County
 PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

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Date: August 8, 2017
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 **July 2017**.

From the Office of the Director

Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

Date/Status	Tracking Number	Summary
7/26//2017 Approved	C-30-04-028-1-05	Termination of Use Management Agreement with Fort Adobe Paintball Complex: Approve the termination (Termination) of the Use Management Agreement (UMA) for the Fort Adobe Paintball Complex located at Adobe Dam Regional Park. Termination is mutually requested as the concessionaire has closed his business July 1, 2016 due to financial constraints. The concessionaire has transferred ownership a 2008 Wells Cargo Comfort Elite ADA +2 Portable Restroom Trailer in lieu of fees owed.
7/26/2017 Approved	C-30-18-001-M-00	New CMCA with Gordos Chucheria's: Approve a CMCA with Gordos Chucheria's to manage and operate a commercial food concession within the Maricopa County Regional Park System.

- **Buckeye Hills Buckeye Hills General Joe Foss Shooting Complex** The Use Management Agreement with the Buckeye Hills Sportsman's Club termed on June 30, 2017 and they chose not to exercise their 5-year renewal option. Due to limited resources, we have temporarily closed the Complex during the typically slow summer season until we've hammered out the details with a new concessionaire. We are continuing to work with several governmental agencies in a collaborative effort for management of the range to provide weekday training (law enforcement and military) and then operate the facility on the weekends for the general public.
- **Estrella Youth Sports** does not have the funding for the proposed improvements for the Estrella Sports Complex as required by the Use Management Agreement. The Termination Agreement has been issued and will be on the August 23rd Board of Supervisor's agenda for approval.
- **McDowell:** We have drafted a Request for Expression of Interest to identify potential government or non-profit partnership opportunities for the development, permitting, construction, operation, management and maintenance of a native wildlife rescue conservation and nature center ("Complex") at McDowell Mountain Regional Park. The Complex may consist of facilities or amenities, to include but not limited to 1) Wildlife education and nature center; 2) Retail sales, such as educational materials; 3) Wildlife sanctuary and public viewing areas; and 4) Wildlife rehabilitation center (optional). The Complex shall include a minimum of 3,000 square feet of space for a park nature center to include the 1) Visitor information counter; 2) Retail sales area for park merchandise; 3) Area for park interpretive information and education displays; 4) Classroom; 5) Four staff offices; and 6) Other amenities typical for a Maricopa County park nature center.

Administration

The purpose of the Administrative Division is to provide strategic direction, leadership, administrative and financial support to the Director and employees of the department so they can produce the results necessary to achieve the departmental mission and vision.

Financial/Budget Status:

- The Department has finished our end of FY17 budget close. Work is now occurring to ensure last minute JV's (Journal Vouchers) and charges from other Departments hit the correct accounting strings and funds.
- The FY18 budget is not available from the County Office of Management and Budget to run reports at this time. The system is undergoing updates due to an incorrect budget upload. It is anticipated the system will be ready for use prior to the end of August.

Procurement Services:

- The new fiscal year started off busy with over 170 submitted requisitions to make purchases of various items. The majority of requests are for souvenir items as the parks prepare for the upcoming season.

Accounting Services:

- Staff continues to work on reducing the number of outstanding invoices. Three more accounts were cleared this last month bringing the total to two accounts that we have been unsuccessful in collection of past due fees.

Contracts:

- **Adobe:** As previously reported, there is a 6-foot discrepancy between the Base Flood Elevations (BFE) set by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the 100-year ponding elevation set by Army Corps of Engineering at Adobe Dam. To correct this situation, the Flood Control District of Maricopa County (FCDMC) has outlined measures to correct the issue and is working with FEMA and the City of Phoenix to allow the construction of new facilities at the 500 Club Golf Course.

Information Technology/Facilities:

- San Tan Regional Park: Two computer units were damaged during the recent storms. Both units had burnt motherboards possibly the result of lightning strike to/near the building. Both systems had surge protection. One computer unit had to be replaced and the other was fixed under warranty.
- Estrella Regional Park: Approval for a second Point of Sale system for the front counter at the Nature Center was processed. This will help speed customer service by allowing multiple customers to make purchases at the same time.

Human Resources:

- Welcome to the following new employees:
 - Dove Luidhardt, Park Supervisor, White Tank Regional Park
 - Eric Hough, Interpretive Ranger, Hassayampa River Preserve
- Farewell and best of luck to the following:
 - Ashley Johnson, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant
- Open positions and recruitments as of July 1, 2017:
 - Park Supervisor, Desert Outdoor Center - Pending request to recruit.
 - Contact Station Assistant, Usery – Pending request to recruit.
 - Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant – Pending updates to job description.
 - Contact Station Assistant, Lake – under recruitment, pending interviews.
 - Park Maintenance Supervisor, Lake – under recruitment.

Volunteer Program:

- Staff has been working to streamline the administrative processes associated with volunteer tracking and performance. This includes updating the department policy, clarification on dismissal processes for poorly performing hosts, increasing the use of Volgistics for tracking and reporting, and finalizing the host/volunteer training plan and use of TheHUB.

- July was hot, but there were still 79 volunteers who came out despite the heat.
- FY18 Year-to-Date Volunteer Hours:

	Jul-17
Total Dept. Hours	3291
Financial Savings	\$79,445
FY18 Hours	3291
FY18 Savings	\$77,536
Number of Volunteers in Month	79

Planning and Development Division

Planning:

- **Vulture Mountain:** Staff continues to review GIS data and layers in the 60% design plans with the consultant, EPS, on park amenities as MCDOT continues design with EPS on 60% plans for Vulture Mine Rd as well as interior County park roadway designs. A completed Environmental Assessment (EA) is required before any construction or management activities may begin. The BLM began the EA process and hosted a Public Scoping meeting in Wickenburg on July 13th. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting. The public scoping period began on June 31, 2017, and ended July 29, 2017. Comments made during the meeting and scoping period are currently being evaluated by BLM.
- The Planner is developing a presentation on the Sun Corridor Trail for Arizona Parks and Recreation Association Conference to be held in Phoenix in August 2017. Work also continues on the internal review of the revised Trails Management Manual.

Trades Crew:

- The Trades Crew has been working on numerous park projects during July including the completion of bird blinds at Usery Mountain Regional park, completing the steel ramada fascia project at White Tank Mountain Regional Park, repairing storm damage, adding irrigation to the new trees at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park super playground, and numerous electrical and HVAC repairs throughout the park system.

Trails Crew:

- The Trails Crew assisted with some trail repair and tree pruning work at the Hassayampa River Preserve. July projects also included a trail sign inventory and associated sign orders, as well as restocking tools and supplies for the fall trail work.

Project Management:

- The department's project manager has been busy coordinated bids and quotes for the new FY18 project year. This fiscal year has an exceptional budget for capital projects throughout the system. Projects are scheduled for Estrella, White Tank, McDowell, Usery, and Lake Pleasant Regional Parks.

Maricopa Trail and Trail Facilities:

- The following trail segments are currently being worked on: 9, 11, 12, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33, and 35.
- Maintenance
 - The following segments had maintenance completed this month. This includes grooming the trail tread, cutting and trimming trees and brush off the trail corridors and signage: 9, 10, 11 and 35.

Parks Operations Report

Cave Creek Regional Park:

- In July, the park hosted seven interpretive programs with 200 participants attending. In addition, one outreach program was conducted.

- On July 29th, an Eagle Scout started the first phase of refurbishing the Park Monument sign by removing the old lettering and painting the structure. The second phase will be completed on August 5th when the new lettering will be placed.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- Hiking picked up slightly in July as the monsoon storm weather cooled with rain and clouds.
- Estrella had four interpretive outreach programs in July. Three of the outreach programs provided interpretive services to students across the west valley in Goodyear and Avondale, reaching a total of 230 children ages 3-13. The fourth outreach was an invitation from teachers in the Avondale School District to share information about programs in the park and how we could serve as a resource for school trips and outreach. There were a total of 120 educators in attendance to learn about the park and opportunities available. On July 29th the Nature Center had 12 people in attendance for a "Lunch with the Critters" program, this was also a Wet 'n' Wild giveaway.
- Park hosts and staff joined the construction crew to plumb sprinkler and bubbler lines to water the newly planted trees by the Super Playground. The trees should grow and create a nice shade canopy over the sidewalks and areas around the playground and restroom.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park:

- Lake Pleasant offered 17 interpretive programs during the month of July to the enjoyment of 110 program participants. The highlights of the month included the *Exploring the Northern Coves/Pipeline Canyon Paddle* and the *History of Lake Pleasant*. Unfortunately, Mother Nature decided to continually downpour rain almost every weekend during the month of July, impacting program attendance.
- The July 3rd Fireworks Show at Lake Pleasant went off smoothly. No park closures were necessary this year due to lower water levels, increased shoreline availability and the Contact Station staff's ability to quickly get customers through the entrance line and on to their destinations within the park.
- The Park Supervisor is currently working with an Eagle Scout and the Arizona Game and Fish Department to try to coordinate fish habitats around the park.
- Lake Pleasant finished the year with approximately 631,149 park visitors, a slight 1.9% decline from the previous year. The excessive number of storms the park embattled during the month of January and the limited number of staff available in the Contact Stations during the busier months may have impacted the lower count.
- During the middle of July, the park was hit with several damaging monsoon storms. The 10-Lane west dock incurred damage due to large waves and extensive number of boats tied to the dock during the storm. This caused the heavy anchor to shift approximately 20-30 yards creating slack in the anchor/winch lines and extensive damage/loss of the dock walkway. The Park is currently working with Facilities Management, Risk Management, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department to replace the dock. The 4-Lane and 10-Lane east dock is available for use at this time and only required minor repairs to put back in operational status after the storms. In addition, the power to the park was out for the entire weekend July 14th (Friday thru Sunday). Special thanks to the Park Staff that worked thru the warm temperatures and high humidity and persevered to continue providing the tremendous customer service they are known for providing. Scorpion Bay Marina incurred damages to some roofing, dock structures and break-waters, but are currently working to resolve and repair the damage. Pleasant Harbor Marina (owned and operated by the Maricopa Water District) did not fare as well, and incurred significant damage to various components of the marina which will require extensive and timely repairs.
- Interviews are currently being scheduled/held for the Lake Pleasant Park Maintenance Supervisor and Full-Time Contact Station Assistant.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park:

- During the month of July, nine interpretive programs were offered at the park with 13 people in attendance.
- One night ride took place during the month on Saturday, July 15th at the Pemberton Trailhead; approximately 157 people participated. Fountain Hills Bike Shop co-sponsors this program by providing water, soda and snacks after the ride.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- In July, San Tan presented 18 programs with a total of 245 participants. A well-received program by both locals and out-of-town visitors was the *Sunset Photography Walk*, with monsoon skies providing a great opportunity for souvenir snapshots. Also, two indoor presentations with a monsoon theme provided helpful safety and awareness information to new residents experiencing their first summer here, which they noted as a stark contrast to their summer experiences in California, Illinois and Oklahoma.
- During this month, the Park experienced the effects of monsoon activity with severe flooding and residual debris around the Visitor Center and moderate damage along its 20+ miles of trails. All park staff played a role in cleaning up and repairing these areas for the safety of all visitors and to curb future damage for the remainder of the season.

Spur Cross Conservation Area:

- In July, the park hosted six programs with 87 participants in attendance. The highlighted programs for the month: *Fruits of the Desert* with 58 attendees and *Full Moon Hike* with 29 participants.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- Usery Mountain Regional Park offered 18 interpretive ranger programs totaling 728 participants.
- The Usery Mountain Archers continued to offer the Thursday night archery league. The league is held every Thursday night during the summer at 7pm and had 68 participants in July.
- Two-Wheel Jones continued to offer the Summer Night Ride Series for all ages. Riders use headlamps and ride the trails in the evening when the weather is cooler. The bike shop provides free snacks to participants after the ride.
- Two new bird blinds were installed at the viewing pond. The blinds will help birders and photographers capture wildlife through binoculars or a camera without spooking the critters.
- Maintenance staff removed old fencing around the pump house near the viewing pond and cleaned up the area so it blends more naturally with the environment.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- The park provided 11 programs, outreaches, and events in July with 309 total attendance. Any program having to do with critters was the answer in July with two *Snake Feedings* being especially well attended with 70 and 38 people.
- The new park supervisor, Dove Luidhardt started at the end of July. She jumped right in her first week training and dealing with a water main break in which all the water in the park had to be turned off for repairs.
- During the summer heat, hikers are utilizing the early morning and near sunset hours to enjoy the park.

Vulture Mountain Regional Park:

- The Hassayampa River Preserve (HRP) is now fully staffed! By the beginning of July, HRP welcomed its two part-time employees, Mary Larson (Office Assistant) and John Dwyer (Maintenance Worker). More staff meant additional help cleaning, organizing, and inventorying around the Preserve. The new interpretive ranger, Eric Hough, started on July 31st.
- July saw the return of cows onto Preserve property. Local ranchers were contacted, who organized a cattle roundup and were able to remove 13 cattle. The Trails Crew restrung one of the down fences to hopefully prevent future cattle trespass.
- July also saw the effects of monsoon season at the Preserve. High temps and extremely high humidity kept visitation low, topping out at 210 people. Due to this expected low visitation, only one interpretive program, an early morning bird walk, was conducted during the month of July.
- Park staff have had a taste of monsoon flooding, necessitating monitoring river conditions on a daily basis, pulling the trail bridges as needed, and repairing minor trail damage from monsoon storms. Windy conditions associated with monsoons have also brought down several trees around the Preserve.
- Planning for a small grant-funded fuels reduction project around the Visitor Center area was scheduled with expected completion in August. This project will lessen the threat of wildfire and its effects to the historic buildings and resources.