



Maricopa County

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

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Date: March 15, 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 January/February 2017.

From the Office of the Director

A special *THANK YOU!!!* to all of our volunteers, including hosts, community volunteers, stewards and episodic volunteers. We couldn't do it without you!

Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

Date/Status	Tracking Number	Summary
4/26/2017 Pending	C-30-17-020-M-00	Proposed Revisions of the Parks Fee Schedule: Board of Supervisors set a Public Hearing for comments and approval of the Hassayampa entrance fee and room rental fee for April 26, 2017. If approved, fees will be effective 5/1/17.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-17-011-M-00	Agreement to Donate and Waiver of Appraisal and Compensation with TNC for the Hassayampa River Preserve: Approve the Agreement for The Nature Conservancy to donate 65.3 acre parcel known as the visitor center parcel and 646 acres known as the leased parcel, along with all associated well and water rights as described in the attachments to the Agreement.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-17-012-M-00	Gift Deed with Reservation of Conservation Easement and Access Easement with TNC for the Hassayampa River Preserve: Via execution of this Deed, The Nature Conservancy will convey and quite claim to the County 65.3 acre parcel known as the visitor center parcel along with all associated well and water rights as described in the attachments to the Deed.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-17-013-M-00	Lease Agreement with TNC for the Hassayampa River Preserve: Approve the Lease Agreement with TNC to lease 646 acres of land for the fee of \$1.00 until April 30, 2022 (with renewal term of 10 years along with an extension of 10 years). Upon resolution of the boundary discrepancies, TNC intends to convey the leased lands to County via a Gift Deed with Reservation of Conservation Easement.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-17-018-M-00	Acknowledgement of Conditions for the Conservation Easement Documentation Report with TNC for the Hassayampa River Preserve: Execution of the Acknowledgement of the Conditions of the Conservation Easement Report that provides a natural resource inventory and documents the condition of the 65.3 acres of land known as the visitor center parcel donated to the County via Gift Deed and Donate Agreement.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-17-022-M-00	Acknowledgement of Condition of the Leased Property Report for the Lease Agreement with TNC for the Hassayampa River Preserve: Execution of the Acknowledgement of the Conditions of the Leased Property Report that provides a natural resource inventory and documents the condition of the 65.3 acres of land known as the visitor center parcel donated to the County via Gift Deed and Donate Agreement.

3/22/17 Pending	C-30-17-021-M-00	Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Buckeye and Maricopa County for Maricopa Trail Segments 33 and 35: Approve the IGA with the City of Buckeye for Maricopa Trail Segments 33 and 35, to construct a multi-modal trail section as an alternative transportation route through the west valley communities that connects White Tank Park to Estrella Park.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-15-004-M-03	Amendment to Monopole Use Management Agreement with Crown Castle: Approve the Amendment to the Use Management Agreement with Crown Castle to allow upgrades of new wireless technology at Lake Pleasant Regional Park.
3/22/17 Pending	C-30-08-034-1-06	Consent to Assignment and to an Amended and Restated Sub-Use Agreement to the Use Management Agreement between Maricopa County and CLP Phoenix AZ Waterpark, LLC: Approve the Consent to Assignment and to an Amended and Restated Sub-Use Agreement to the UMA for CLP Phoenix AZ Waterpark LLC (Concessionaire Wet' n Wild) to EPR Parks, LLC. the Sub-Use Agreement
2/15/2017 Approved	C-30-17-019-M-00	Challenge Cost Share Agreement with US Dept. of Agriculture Forest Service for Trail Maintenance at Usery Mountain Regional Park: Approved the Agreement for the maintenance of the Pass Mountain and Wind Cave trails located at Usery Mountain Park.
2/15/2017 Approved	C-30-15-017-3-01	Modification to Challenge Cost Share Agreement with US Dept. of Agriculture Forest Service: Approved the Modification to the Agreement to document the construction (Phase II) of the Cave Creek Range District portion of the Maricopa Trail Segment 22. This Modification will also extend the Agreement to 12/17/2019.
2/15/2017 Approved	C-30-13-021-M-01	Assignment of Commercial Management Concessions Agreement Rights with No Limits Scuba, LLC: Approved the Assignment of the Agreement from No Limits Scuba, LLC to LTS, LLC to manage and operate and maintain a scuba diving training and certification concession at Lake Pleasant Regional Park.
2/15/2017 Approved	C-30-08-023-2-01	Termination of Agreement with Central Arizona Water Conservation District providing for the Delivery of Excess CAP Water: Approved the Termination of the Agreement with Central Arizona Water Conservation District that allowed excess water to be provided through the Central Arizona Project canals for Adobe Dam Regional Park's 500 Club Golf Course.

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:

- FY18 Requested Budget has been completed and submitted to OMB for consideration. Overall, Parks requested additional expenditure and revenue authority in our special revenue funds (Enhancement and Lake) with the other funds remaining flat. It appears this request is moving forward and a final determination on our budget by OMB is expected sometime in March.
- FY17 year to date budget forecast is good (below). A brief summary of Parks budget forecast through February 2017 close is below:
 - Donation Fund (F243) is reporting over budget for expenditures and revenue. This is due to a higher than anticipated requests for memorial benches and spending for Daisy Mountain work that did not code correctly (will be corrected in March). It is anticipated that an adjustment to expenditure and revenue authority will be needed in FY17 to cover the additional memorial benches.
 - Enhancement Fund (F241) is reporting revenue 3.975% over anticipated year to date budget (\$3,350,461) and expenditures are below year to date budget.
 - Lake Fund (F240) is reporting revenue 2.76% over anticipated year to date budget (\$1,678,593) and expenditures are below budget.
 - Spur Cross (F225) is reporting revenue .65% over anticipated year to date budget (\$177,846) and expenditures are also over budget. This is due to a calendarization issue and will be corrected in the next forecast.

- Souvenir Fund (F239) is reporting revenue 35% over anticipated year to date budget (\$146,422) and is also forecasting to be below expenditure budget.
- Note: The three negative revenue variances (red) are vehicle financing revenue that has not been received as of yet.

Dept	Dept Name	Fund	Fund Name	Approp Group	Approp Group Name	Revised Revenue	Actual Revenue	Revenue Variance	Revised Expenditures	Actual Expenditures	Expenditure Variance
D300	Parks and Rec	100	General	NRNP	NonRecr NonPrjt	\$0		\$0	\$30,000		\$30,000
D300	Parks and Rec	100	General	OPER	Operating	\$0	\$480,255		\$480,255	\$324,059	\$156,196
D300	Parks and Rec	100	General	PKRR	Parks Rtm Upgr	\$0		\$0	\$156,510	\$6,510	\$150,000
D300	Parks and Rec	225	Spr Cross Ranch	NRNP	NonRecr NonPrjt	\$30,837		(\$30,837)	\$31,238	\$31,238	\$0
D300	Parks and Rec	225	Spr Cross Ranch	OPER	Operating	\$177,846	\$179,001.17	\$1,155	\$176,771	\$190,058	(\$13,287)
D300	Parks and Rec	230	Parks&Rec Grant	NRNP	NonRecr NonPrjt	\$0		\$0	\$10,373	\$1,767	\$8,606
D300	Parks and Rec	230	Parks&Rec Grant	OPER	Operating	\$0	\$48,827.87	\$48,828	\$0	\$0	\$0
D300	Parks and Rec	239	Parks Souvenir	OPER	Operating	\$146,422	\$198,194.26	\$51,772	\$268,727	\$224,242	\$44,486
D300	Parks and Rec	240	Lk Plsnt Rc Svc	NRNP	NonRecr NonPrjt	\$380,233		(\$380,233)	\$540,176	\$474,811	\$65,365
D300	Parks and Rec	240	Lk Plsnt Rc Svc	OPER	Operating	\$1,678,593	\$1,725,063.88	\$46,471	\$1,656,429	\$1,628,752	\$27,677
D300	Parks and Rec	241	Parks Enhncmnt	NRNP	NonRecr NonPrjt	\$610,129		(\$610,129)	\$1,605,464	\$884,530	\$720,934
D300	Parks and Rec	241	Parks Enhncmnt	OPER	Operating	\$3,350,461	\$3,483,951.75	\$133,491	\$3,027,133	\$2,884,945	\$142,188
D300	Parks and Rec	241	Parks Enhncmnt	PKRR	Parks Rtm Upgr	\$0		\$0	\$200,000	\$123,633	\$76,367
D300	Parks and Rec	243	Parks Donations	NRNP	NonRecr NonPrjt	\$0		\$0	\$230,000	\$192,956	\$37,044
D300	Parks and Rec	243	Parks Donations	OPER	Operating	\$17,533	\$28,909.41	\$11,376	\$13,363	\$51,193	(\$37,830)
D300	Parks and Rec	243	Parks Donations	WMD3	DAISYMTNTRLS	\$185,000	\$185,000.00	\$0	\$75,000	\$395	\$74,605

Procurement Services:

- More efficient storage of P Card backup has been implemented with all items now stored in OnBase, the County's electronic file system.
- Several contracts are coming up for renewal; work was done with Office of Procurement Services to ensure contract renewal with no interruption to work flow.
- Extensive work has been done in February to begin the FY18 Souvenir Fund product changes. Several new vendors have been selected with new and different products than the Parks have carried in the past.

Accounting Services:

- The new CGI system had some initial challenges with how revenue was reporting and being recorded with Department of Finance. Almost all Department Revenue Codes were inaccurate and this was corrected during February for months July to December.

Contracts:

- **Lake Pleasant:** Desert Troon's Scorpion Bay's store and restaurant is undergoing restoration with anticipation of completion in May. In addition to these improvements they are also adding an additional, Dock E, with new shower/restroom facility and dock cabins. Desert Troon will be providing a presentation at the March 21, 2017 Parks Commission meeting.
- **Adobe:** Staff will meet with the County's Chief Financial Officer for the proposed Legacy Sports Complex at Adobe Dam Regional Park for review of the analysis of market and feasibility studies. Legacy is obtaining construction costs in order to secure funding for the project. For this process, their contractor will be taking samplings of the dirt on site for geotechnical/structural studies.
- **Buckeye Hills:** We have been working with Buckeye Police Department to manage the range, however, giving the restrictions of use due no permanent power and water for the facility. Staff is also researching other options, such as working with the Maricopa County Sherriff's Office to see if they have interest in this facility.

Information Technology/Facilities:

- The County is in the process of updating to Office 2013 and this caused a few Verizon capacity issues within Laptops that utilize air cards for connectivity. It appears these issues have been resolved.

Human Resources:

- Welcome to the following new employees:
 - Carlos Zayas – Contact Station Assistant, Lake (Transfer from MCSO)
 - William Gerchar – Interpretive Ranger, Lake
 - Sandra Hurlbut – Interpretive Ranger, Lake

- Kristin Cowgill – Contact Station Assistant, Estrella
- Amy Mitic – Park Maintenance, Estrella
- Donald Lucas - Trades Specialist, Trades
- Nicholas Schultz - Park Maintenance, Spur Cross
- John Grutzmacher - Park Maintenance, McDowell
- Promotions:
 - Congratulations for Jeffery Gruver promoting to Trades Specialist Supervisor
- Farewell and best of luck to the following:
 - Rich Glinski, Park Supervisor, DOC
- Open positions and recruitments:
 - Contact Station Assistant (Temporary) – Lake Pleasant – Pending Recruitment
 - Park Maintenance, Lake Pleasant – Candidate selected; pending hire process
 - Interpretive Ranger, White Tank – Interviews underway
 - Trades Specialist, Trades – Pending Recruitment

Volunteer Program:

- The Prickly Pedal Race was postponed to April 1, 2017 due to heavy rains and flooding in January. There were 50 volunteers signed up for the original date and only a few have declined to participate in April. Additionally, several new individuals and groups have signed up for the new date.
- Several groups assisted with Shoreline Cleanup efforts at Lake Pleasant in January and February.
- FY17 Volunteer Hours:

	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17
Total Dept. Hours	2,945	3,146	5,113	6,283	9,900	10,972	13,274	11,808
Financial Savings	\$69,384	\$74,120	\$120,462	\$148,027	\$233,244	\$258,500	\$312,735	\$278,196
YTD Hours	2,945	6,091	11,204	17,487	27,387	38,359	51,633	63,441
YTD Savings	\$69,384	\$143,504	\$263,966	\$411,994	\$645,238	\$903,738	\$1,216,473	\$1,494,670
Prev. Year Month Total Hours	3,739	2,949	4,568	6,828	11,319	11,967	14,240	11,897
Prev. Year YTD Hours	3,739	6,688	11,256	18,083	29,402	41,369	55,609	67,506
Prev. Year Financial Savings	\$86,264	\$154,286	\$259,669	\$417,179	\$678,314	\$954,380	\$1,282,896	\$1,557,360
# of Volunteers-current month	78	75	502	228	371	218	287	277

Planning and Development Division

Planning:

- Work on the Vulture Mountain CRMA (Cooperative Recreation Management Area) continues with the BLM. Currently, mining claim and grazing data and cultural and biological surveys are underway. Staff are updating the plan of development and are preparing for the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process and public scoping.

Trades Crew:

- Trades staff blended 200 tons of rock into the entry road of the Hassayampa River Preserve. The rock was mixed with existing road bed material to solidify the road and allow it to hold up better during rain events.
- Trades staff assembled and set 23 new concrete picnic tables at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. The tables were ordered for the shade canopy areas around the super playground as ongoing improvements continue in the area.

Trails Crew:

- Trails Crew worked with two AZCC (Arizona Conservation Corps) crews for three weeks to repair and reconstruct a two-mile section on the Goat Camp Trail at White Tank Park. Crews worked to remove large rocks and boulders from the trail and reconstruct the trail tread.
- Trail Crew completed a reroute of the Gadsden Trail at Estrella Park. The crew rerouted about a ½ mile section to get the trail out of the bottom of a large wash.

Project Management:

- The ramada improvement project at White Tank Mountain Regional Park has been substantially completed. Following final inspection and acceptance by the Department, our Trades Crew welders will fabricate metal fascia panels on the four sides of the ramada to complete the work. By leveraging the project dollars with department staff, construction and renovation dollars can be stretched to complete work which may otherwise not be completed.
- The 4-Lane ET bed project has been started at Lake Pleasant. This new project will provide additional wastewater capacity as this area grows in popularity and new facilities are added in the future.
- The turf improvement project at Estrella Mountain Regional Park is near completion for this fiscal year. New concrete work including concrete walks, concrete under the Ramada's, and trees have been installed. This multi-year effort will continue improving facilities for park visitors and improve overall aesthetics of the park areas.

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, 35 and 78.
- The following portions of the Maricopa Trail are in review by the Arizona State Land Department:
 - Segment 35 – North and south of I-10 on the Tuthill Road alignment
 - Segment 12 – North of SR303 on Lake Pleasant Road
 - Segment 11 – East of SR303 on Happy Valley Parkway
 - Segment 33 – Rainbow Valley – BLM land to Estrella Community
- Agreement preparation/negotiations:
 - City of Scottsdale – Segments 23, 24 25 and 26 – Scottsdale City Council expected approval March 2017.
 - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation – Segment 27 – License approved by the Reclamation December 2016.
 - City of Buckeye – Segment 35 – in review.
 - City of Avondale – Segment 9 and Segment 1 – part of Avondale Master Plan
 - Bureau of Land Management – Submitted plan of proposed route between Estrella Mountain Park and Buckeye Hills Park.
- Construction
 - Segment 27 Granite Reef – Completed one mile of new trail and this completes this segment.
 - Segment 9 Tres Rios - Completed connecting trails on east and west ends in January 2017, completing this segment.
 - Segment 35 – I-10 at Tuthill Road – Completed connecting trail to Verrado and built fencing and gates on the box culvert under I-10. Waiting on state land to complete segment.

Parks Operations Report

Cave Creek Regional Park:

- In January, the park hosted 21 interpretive programs with 229 participants attending.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Venomous or Poisonous* with 32 participants and *Feeding Frenzy* with 32 attendees.
- In February, the park hosted 18 interpretive programs with 283 attendees.
- The *4th Annual Elephant Mountain Run* drew in 387 runners. The event was staged at Cave Creek Regional Park. The courses incorporate Go John, Quartz, Slate, Maricopa Regional Trail and Spur Cross Trail. Participants had the opportunity to register for a 50 km, 35 km, or 12 km course.

- The highlighted programs for the month: *Feeding Frenzy* with 43 attendees and *Venomous or Poisonous* with 34 attendees.
- The campground has been full for the last two months and campers have been utilizing the new overflow sites as well.
- Staff and Host have received several compliments about the new campsites and how the area looks so much nicer then when it was a group campground.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- Estrella Park had 26 public programs in January with 476 people in attendance. Due to January inclement weather, several programs rescheduled or cancelled. The big hit for the month was the *Sing-along Campfire* program.
- Attendance for hiking has been strong this winter and over the last few years, the numbers of hikers has been growing at Estrella. Like last year, many park users enthusiastically participated in the *100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge*. The Interpretive Ranger's popular "Passport Estrella Hike Series" also had great attendance and a very enthusiastic following.
- *Facebook* is an integral hub for users to friend, follow and communicate with the Interpretive Ranger. It has become quite the popular place to hang out for park users.
- The *Coldwater Rumble*, a running race in the Aravaipa Desert Trail Running series was held in mid-January with 371 runners in attendance. They competed over a variety of distances including several 100-mile runners running through the night in the park.
- The Mountain Bike Association of Arizona (MBAA) hosted their annual mountain bike race at the end of January at the Competitive Track at Estrella. There were 541 competitors covering the beginner to expert classes.
- The horseback trail rides and wagon rides are doing well this January.
- The new position of part-time Entry Station Assistant was hired in January and this employee will be helping to keep the entry station open more hours than in previous years in order to collect the necessary park fees.
- The Trades Crew and Facilities Management helped out Estrella Park by removing very old light poles and their concrete foundations around the park.
- Estrella Park had 28 public programs in February with 639 people in attendance. The *Full Moon Hike* had a record number of 62 guests heading out on the trail in the twilight. The interpretive ranger has been collaborating on programs and events with the horseback riding concessionaire. The "Ride with a Ranger" wagon rides have been sold out for the rest of the year! *Passport Estrella* wrapped up and all participants enjoyed their end of season celebration.
- Overall park attendance increased in February for Estrella. Not only did more hikers than ever enjoy the February weather and the start of the wonderful wildflower season, but picnickers utilizing the ramadas and the Super Playground also increased. The Nature Center also experienced more visitors coming in to ask questions, view the animals, purchase souvenirs and annual passes.
- A new Park Maintenance Worker was hired and started in the second week of February. It has been helpful to be fully staffed at Estrella Park again.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park:

- Lake Pleasant welcomed a total of 684 program attendees to the 47 programs offered during the months of January and February. The highlights of the month included *Get Fit with a Lake View*, *Exploring Lake Pleasant by Kayak*, *Looking for Wild Burros*, and *The People behind the Building of the Old Lake Pleasant Dam*, and *Homesteading: A Hard Way of Living*.
- The Lake Pleasant Park Interpretive Ranger successfully completed his re-certification for the American Canoe Association (ACA) for instructing on-water paddling (i.e. kayaking, canoeing, and stand-up paddleboarding).
- The Lake Pleasant Administrative Supervisor and Park Supervisor received "Train the Trainer" training to train other staff in the area of Hazard Communication.
- The Lake Pleasant maintenance team successfully removed an extremely large buildup of debris blocking sections of a culvert bridge in Morgan City Wash. It was a very challenging task, but the crew made it look easy and was able to restore the integrity of the bridge and area.

- Park staff has regularly been meeting with members of the County Parks' trades, trails, and management team, along with contractors/engineers to identify solutions to provide a temporary bridge system for the damaged floating bridge in Pipeline Canyon. A design has been proposed and we hope to be able to implement the new bridge by the middle of April...just in time for the annual *Dam Good Run event*. Special thanks to the Lake Pleasant Park Maintenance Supervisor and Navigational Aid Technicians for their tremendous efforts on this project.
- The park was happy to welcome two new part-time interpretive rangers – Bill Gerchar and Sandra Hurlbut. Both rangers have a very strong background in outdoor education and we are very excited for the contributions they are going to make at the lake.
- Special thanks to Cave Creek and Park Headquarters for providing staff to help support and fill several needed shifts within our Contact Station and Discovery Center.
- Several of the Lake Pleasant maintenance workers, both PT interpretive rangers, and the park supervisor worked diligently over a one week period to relocate approximately 150 buckhorn cholla plants from the site location of the newly expanded 4-Lane evapotranspiration bed to rehabilitate a severely damaged/disturbed area near north Lake Pleasant. The cacti will hopefully serve as a protective barrier and also allow the mud bogging/illegal OHV area a chance to return to its original state some day in the near future.
- The bald eagle nestwatchers have returned for the season. The park is very excited, as early reports indicate two active nesting sites this season. Each site appears to have at least one egg in the nest. In addition, the Lake Pleasant Park Supervisor attended the semi-annual Bald and Golden Eagle Management Committee Meeting to support the efforts of conservation for eagles in Arizona.
- The Lake Pleasant Park Supervisor attended the annual Quagga Mussels meeting with the Arizona Game and Fish, along with other agencies involved in the Aquatic and Invasive Species program. Lake Pleasant continues to try to get the word out about these invasive species and educate the boating public to pull their plugs and drain their boats to help eliminate the potential exposure of this species to new or un-impacted waters. Unfortunately, Lake Pleasant has been impacted since 2007.
- Progress is underway for site improvements at Scorpion Bay Marina to provide additional space in the area of the restaurant, signage upgrades, dock slips and potentially on-water cabins.
- The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office chain gang came out to Lake Pleasant on three separate occasions to help remove vegetation growing along the guard rails along the popular South Park Rd. In addition, they helped remove approximately 50 large garbage bags worth of trash from the shoreline areas of Two Cow Cove and Fireman's Cove.
- The Lake Pleasant Park Maintenance Supervisor met with members from the Risk Management team for our annual safety inspection. The park received high marks for safety with only a few minor items needing to be addressed. Great job to the Lake Pleasant team for their continued safety efforts.
- A new informational/educational kiosk was installed at the Pipeline Trailhead to replace the original kiosk that was damaged by a vandal. The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office worked diligently and was able to locate a suspect in the crime and that individual paid for the new kiosk to be installed.
- After a tremendous amount of planning efforts over the past year, the H2OMG Festival and AZ Copper Cup (hydrofoil boat races) had to be rescheduled from February 2017 to February 2018. It was great to see the collaboration and tremendous effort on behalf of the various agencies working so well together and trying to help provide the promoter the opportunity to host the event.
- A special thanks to the Lake Pleasant park hosts and volunteers for the tremendous effort and support they have provided this season. The park regularly receives compliments for the well-kept campgrounds, facilities and customer service – and is in large part, related to the passion and energy to which the hosts approach their duties. We couldn't do it without them.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park:

- During the month of January, 21 interpretive programs were offered at the park with 230 park visitors in attendance. The most popular single program was a presentation on *Tarantulas & Scorpions* with 17 in attendance.
- Ranger Amy offered an outreach program at Fountain Hills Elementary School with 125 youth in attendance.

- Two special events took place during the month of January:
 - 870 people participated in the Mountain Bike race plus nearly 500 spectators were in attendance.
 - REI hosted a 5K and 13K Trail run event; 125 runners participated and approximately 100 spectators were in attendance.
- *Lee Likes Bikes* hosted a bicycle skills clinic with 18 participants. *Pivot Cycles* hosted a free bike demonstration at our competitive track parking lot.
- REI hosted a number of classes at McDowell Mountain Park in January: *Introduction to Maps & Compass*, *Introduction to Mountain Biking for Women* and *Intro to Mountain Biking for Men*. Each class had approximately 15 participants.
- During the month of February, 16 interpretive programs were offered at the park with 238 park visitors in attendance. The most popular single program was *Stargazing for Everyone* with 108 in attendance; *Liberty Wildlife* also hosted a live animal presentation with 28 people in attendance.
- Five special events took place during the month of February:
 - Xterra (Trail Run) with 342 participants and approximately 200 spectators in attendance.
 - Pemberton 50K; 128 runners participated along with about 100 spectators in attendance.
 - McDowell Criterium (road bike race), 204 participated and approximately 100 spectators were in attendance.
 - Desert Classic Duathlon, 149 showed to compete (even in the rain!), approximately 100 spectators also braved the cold, rainy weather.
 - Stoneman 10K (first time event) 23 runners participated.
- Ranger Amy and various Park Hosts participated in the Fountain Hills Art Fair by providing an information booth. Various park materials & critters were on display along with park information, maps, etc. Approximately 1,700 people visited our booth during the 3-day event.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- In January, the park hosted 18 programs with a total of 138 participants. One highlight was a *Meet the Ranger* program, where 50 visitors met and chatted with our new ranger, Nikki. Another was *Volunteer Trailwork Day*, where 10 citizens helped park staff with pruning, drain repair and other maintenance along the Moonlight and Stargazer Trails.
- Ranger Nikki presented a San Tan geology program at Queen Creek Middle School for fifty 7th grade Honor Students. The school followed up with a field trip to the park so that their students could gain firsthand experience by exploring the trails, learning how to use a GPS and documenting the park's unique geologic features. They plan to develop an App that can be used by park staff and visitors in the future.
- In addition, the park hosted a major trail running event, two equine competitions and a mountain bike demonstration for a total of 550 participants and volunteers.
- For the entire month of January, staff held a *Name our Rattlesnake* contest to help name a new Western Diamondback that the park received in December. Close to 150 entries were received from park visitors with suggestions such as Angry Snake, Fluffy and Mr. Bite. The winning name was Malpais, a reference to the Malpais Hills located on the south end of the park.
- In February, San Tan hosted 20 programs with a total of over 450 participants. A big draw was the *Moonlight Hike* with 100 visitors braving the clouds to get a peek at the Snow Moon. Another popular program was the *Sunset Photography Hike* where novice shutterbugs shared stories and advice on getting the perfect shot. The local homeschool community has been happy to see the return of programming and participated in two February programs with a total of 25 people.
- San Tan also hosted a bike demo with approximately 50 park visitors riding new bike models.
- At the end of the month, Ranger Nikki hosted a table at the Gilbert Outdoor Expo that took place at the Riparian Preserve. Approximately 225 people of all ages visited her table and learned what San Tan and other County parks have to offer. She brought along a hands-on matching game where participants had to assign the appropriate name card to plant samples, such as creosote, brittlebush, saguaro and cholla.

Spur Cross Conservation Area:

- The Park hosted 20 interpretive programs in January with 251 participants attending.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Full Moon Hike* with 48 attendees and *Find the Ranger* with 34 participants.

- In February, the park hosted 19 programs with 358 participants in attendance.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Full Moon Hike* with the record breaking attendance of 156 hikers and *Elephant Mountain Hike* with 37 attendees.
- A roll over mountain bike gate was installed by the Desert Foothills Mountain Bike Association volunteer group. The group raised the funds and installed the gate at Spur Cross Trail and the Maricopa Trail connection.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- Usery Mountain Regional Park offered 40 interpretive programs in January totaling 1,241 participants and 38 interpretive programs in February totaling 1,630 participants.
- 310 archers from around the state competed in the *Cactus Classic Archery Tournament* hosted by the Usery Mountain Archers. The tournament was held on the walking courses at the archery range and showcased archers of all ages ranging from pee wee to seniors. The Cactus Classic is the first of a four leg archery series held in Arizona.
- February's *Full Moon Hike* had over 290 participants who came out and enjoyed a night hike. Hikers were also treated to a campfire marshmallow roast after the hike to cap off the evening.
- The Park Supervisor attended the "Train the Trainer" Hazard Communication training by Risk Management to be able to train staff and hosts on hazardous materials in the future.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- The park provided 16 programs, outreaches, and events in January with 1,180 total attendance. The biggest events were *Outdoor Adventure Day* and *Stargazing for Everyone* which drew in over 200 stargazers. *Outdoor Adventure Day* was cold and damp which caused a decrease in attendance to only 725. However, those who did brave the inclement weather learned new survival skills, Leave No Trace, all about petroglyphs, furs and tracks, archery 101, beginner mountain biking and much more.
- The annual Xterra running race in January had 298 participants. It was colder this year, but the competitors had fun and enjoyed the trails.
- The Boy Scouts cleaned some picnic areas in the park as part of a community project. Their contributions did not go unnoticed.
- With the improvements to the campground a few years ago, this area of the park gets busier with each year. For the first time, campers had to utilize the overflow area at the Competitive Track every weekend in January.
- Contractors are working in the park on the aging facilities by sandblasting ramadas, replacing lights and adding electric panels. The ramada roofs will be repaired in February.
- The park provided 22 programs, outreaches, and events in February with 779 attending total. The annual hay ride and campfire had 164 attendees and 109 visitors for the moonlight hike. Schools are now coming out to the Library and Nature Center in addition to hiking. The schools split their classes between the Library and the Nature Center to get a well-rounded visit that teachers and students are enjoying.
- White Tank Park sponsored The Friends of White Tank Park and their popular annual Arts and Crafts Fair in February. The Art Fair contracts with many sought-after artists and has become one of the better fairs in the Valley. This year, the fair saw over 2,700 people. The Friends use the Art Fair as a fundraiser to support projects in the park.
- Boy Scouts from the Thunderbird BSA District weeded Area 10 and the picnic area at the Competitive Track. This group does a project in the park most years and their support is greatly appreciated.
- The campground has experienced an increase in February. Not only was overflow camping needed for weekends as it was in January, but also due to the increase in camping demands, the overflow area was necessary during the week in February.
- Due to the greater amount of precipitation in the fall and winter, the wildflowers have been starting to blossom in great abundance. In addition, the waterfall, which has been flowing more days than not has been attracting many visitors. President's Day Monday was a record revenue day for the park because of the flowing waterfall.

Vulture Mountain Regional Park:

- Park staff and other county departments such as legal and real estate are working with TNC staff to finalize drafts of the legal documents necessary for the partnership to proceed.

- As of January 3, 2017, Park staff, through an approved management license agreement, has been on site at the Hassayampa River Preserve managing the day-to-day operations. In spite of the cold, wet weather, attendance has been comparable with previous years under TNC management. The transition has been smooth with the volunteers being very active in their continued contributions from Visitor Center coverage to maintenance and trail work.
- The R&PP Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed developed areas in the Vulture Mountains Recreation Area has been resurrected with the BLM after a delayed period for getting the Notice of Realty Action (NORA) published in the federal Registry. In January and February, conference-style meetings with the BLM, Logan Simpson Consulting and Parks staff were productive and the EA is moving forward with a robust timeline. A field site visit is being conducted in March.
- Parks staff continues to meet and work with the Maricopa County Department of Transportation staff on the Vulture Mountains future road alignment for proposed facilities in the recreation area. 30% roadway designs have been completed and 60% plans are being started.