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## MEMORANDUM

Date: July 1, 2010  
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. Cardin".

Listed below are issues that the department has been involved with since the May, 2010 Director's Summary.

### Budget

#### **Monthly Financial Report – May FY2010**

**General Fund (100) – Agency 300:** On the expenditure side, the General Fund (Fund 100, Agency 300) is currently reporting expenditures 0.5% or \$3,745 under the year to date (YTD) budget through May.

There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

**Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:** Enhancement Fund (Fund 241, Agency 305) is currently reporting revenue at 11.9% or \$377,147 over the YTD budget through May.

Enhancement Fund is currently 4.7% or \$144,111 under the YTD operating budget for expenditures through May.

**Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:** Lake Fund (Fund 240, Agency 302) is currently reporting revenues at 13.7% or \$201,912 over the YTD budget through May.

Lake Fund is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 4.3% or \$65,592 through May.

### Superintendent Report

**Usery Mountain Regional Park:** There were 46 interpretive programs offered in May and 39 in June for a total of 2,118 participants with 776 repeat attendees. The interpretive ranger's brown-bag talks at noon and in the evenings have become the bread & butter programs in the Nature Center. These programs host many repeat annual pass holders, new community members and pizza-lugging families. Stargazing in May twinkled on 220 upturned eyes and despite the increasing temperatures, the Full Moon hikes are always full of shine for our metropolitan residents.

Revenue has increased significantly over May and June last year. Including souvenir sales, the month of May total revenue increased \$14,000. For the month of June, total revenue increased \$5,000.

The interpretive ranger participated in two TV spots on Channel 12. The first being a live weather spot discussing the park-wide fire ban. The second spot was a much longer program about Desert

**July 1, 2010**

Director's Summary

Page 2 of 4

Edibles with actual park visitors participating in a program. The park supervisor participated in the monthly Mesa Talking radio spot highlighting park programs and other happenings in the park. The park supervisor was also interviewed about the county-wide Full Moon hike program for an article in the Arizona Republic. Each week numerous listings and announcements of park activities are published in the Republic, East Valley Tribune, other publications and web calendars and updated by the supervisor and ranger.

Arizona Disabled Sports and 2010 Desert Challenge Games was held with 25 shooters. These participants were disabled archers from across the nation, Canada, and Bermuda, competing for national and international rankings

**Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area (SCRCA):** There were 23 programs held in May with over 150 participants.

Ranger Smith supervised an Eagle Scout project involving installation of steps on the steeper portions of the Elephant Mountain Trail.

Visitation has been dropping all month with 200 visitors per week coming out to the park.

**McDowell Mountain Regional Park:** Revenue in May exceeded last year by approximately 50%. The unusually mild temperatures kept the campgrounds busy. Revenue in June was up 52% over the same month last year.

The first of eight summer night rides was held in May and 101 riders came out to enjoy the near perfect and almost cool evening under a half moon.

In the first half of May, the interpretive ranger offered over 15 hours of programs and had 198 participants.

Another round of spraying the cattails at Nursery Tank and the cutting of most of the dead cattails continues to reduce the non-native opportunistic vegetation. This put the pond in good shape to receive both Pup Fish and Topminnow fish and Arizona Game and Fish introduced 240 Pup Fish to Nursery Tank. The same day, they conducted a survey of the fish in Pemberton Pond. Approximately 88 adult Pup and Topminnow fish were found.

Two new trails were constructed in the park by the MC Parks and Recreation Trails Crew. The tentative new trail names are: Night Hawk Trail, which connects the Pemberton Trail to the North Trail (approximately .5 miles long), and the Tortoise Trail, which connects the parking lot at the Visitor Center with the trail system by going almost due east to the Pemberton Trail (approximately .7 of a mile long).

The wall of the new tortoise habitat was partially constructed by an Eagle Scout candidate in May and June. The habitat is located at the rear of the visitor center.

Work has begun on the Pump Track at McDowell with the water line and the first loop complete. Two more loops are yet to be built to complete the track.

**San Tan Mountain Regional Park:** San Tan offered 14 programs during the months of May and June to the delight of 762 program participants. The highlights of the months were the nighttime scorpion scavenger hunts, full moon hikes and the return of the summer movie series at the park. Special thanks to the User Interpretive Ranger for leading several programs and doing such an exceptional job.

The park received a special invitation to be one of the main attractions at the second annual Spring Spectacular at Edu-Prize Elementary School in Queen Creek. The event attracted over 4,000 parents and students. San Tan displayed several of its finest wildlife friends (gopher snake, desert tortoise, and scorpion) through an interactive experience for youth and families to become more familiar with San Tan and develop a deeper appreciation for nature.

In May, the park welcomed the addition of two new wildlife display animals, a baby and adult chuckwalla. The adult chuckwalla, Chuck, is residing in the outdoor exhibit located near the entry station/visitor center. The baby chuckwalla, Walle, will be kept in the visitor center and used for educational outreach opportunities until it grows. The park also recently received a kingsnake, which will be kept inside the visitor center.

**Estrella Mountain Regional Park:** There were 20 programs held in May with 496 participants of which, 36% were repeat visitors. New programs included "Animal Action Relay" and "Microbiology River Walk". In June, there were 27

**July 1, 2010**

Director's Summary

Page 3 of 4

programs with attendance of 506. Of these, 63% were repeat customers. The "Full Moon in The Desert Hike" attracted 107 participants. New programs included "Viper Voidance" information on training dogs to recognize and avoid rattlesnakes, "If you find a Wild Animal", "Mad Map Relay", and "Our Amazing Earth".

On May 25, vandals came through the fence, broke into electrical panels and cut all electrical wiring to ball field lights. Staff is currently working with Risk Management to repair the damage.

**Cave Creek Regional Park:** The Park has a new park supervisor, Darci Kinsman, who transferred from White Tank to Cave Creek. Interpretive Ranger Jenny Work joins the park, moving over from McDowell.

Operation revenues at the end of the fiscal year were strong at \$319,255, a 14% increase over last year's operation revenue of \$279,344. Nice job!

**White Tank Mountain Regional Park:** The Park is going through a few transitions including a new park supervisor, Raymond Schell, who was the maintenance supervisor for the Lake.

The Nature Center/Library construction is going well. The Nature Center is looking to have a soft opening sometime in September or October with a formal grand opening in November.

Operation revenues end the fiscal year strong at \$501,960, a 9% increase over last year's operation revenue of \$461,247.

**Lake Pleasant Regional Park:** Operation revenues end the fiscal year strong at \$1,751,194, an 11% increase over last year's operation revenue of \$1,572,638. Nice job!

April was an all time high for revenue at Lake Pleasant. The park brought in \$259,804. This was a 32% increase over April of 2009. Typically, June is our strongest month so it was great to have a strong April that even beat out the month of June in years past.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Lake Pleasant Scuba Adventure Day was May 1. We received good advertising for the event including an article in Dive Training Magazine. The event was for both certified scuba divers and non-divers, and open to the general public. People participated in the "Discover Scuba" "Try Kayaking" and "Slippery Snorkel" activities, and watched scuba divers while checking out the many displays. Certified scuba divers went out on several dive boats to exciting dive locations. They tried the underwater obstacle course and underwater navigation contest and some lucky participants even won prizes at the underwater treasure hunt and desert lobster catch. There was something fun for everyone!

The Paddle Fest event was also a big success with 200 people attending each of the 3 days for a total attendance of approximately 600 people.

Safe Boating Celebration was held on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and had a great turnout. There were over 40 boats that participated in the free vessel check provided by the US Coast Guard. Several boat owners passed inspection and received free gifts from the Power Squadron booth. AZ Game & Fish also had a display of animals for the kids while boats were inspected.

Memorial Weekend was strong and smooth. The staff and hosts worked hard at preparing for the onslaught of campers, water enthusiasts and customers of all kinds. Revenues collected for the week were at record levels (\$81,000) and very few issues or incidents were reported by MCSO. All in all, a great recreation week!

The triathlon was very successful and ran smoothly. There were 250 participants for the triathlon and an additional 150 participants that participated in the swim only. No injuries or accidents reported.

**Desert Outdoor Center (DOC):** Lake Pleasant Aquatics Camp began on June 7 with 57 Boy Scouts participating the first week and 51 during week two. This represents a 9% increase over last year. A total of five weeks of Scout camp are devoted to Scouts earning aquatic merit badges (canoeing, small-boat sailing, motorboating, rowing, water sports, kayaking and fishing) and other merit badges (insect study, archaeology, environmental science, geology, first aid, fish and wildlife management, citizenship, energy, weather, reptiles and amphibians, and cooking). Camps run 8 a.m.

**July 1, 2010**

Director's Summary

Page 4 of 4

through 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. A "Trail To Eagle" (TTE) camp runs from July 3-10 and includes an overnight stay. Camp costs this year are \$215 for aquatics camp and \$345 for TTE, up from the \$195 and \$295, respectively.

The DOC is partnering with Lake Pleasant Sailing Club to sponsor "Ladies Day at the Lake" in October. LPSC members will bring their sailboats and expertise, and along with DOC staff afford aquatic instruction to women who are interested in taking up the sport of sailing.

The DOC continues to strongly market wedding opportunities. This work has paid off with three weddings booked for the fall. Each wedding generates approximately \$3,300 in revenue.

In order to improve the marketing efforts of the DOC, staff continues to compile all contact information into lists from visitors and/or those that have expressed interest to visit. Email templates are being generated to make the process as efficient as possible.

Operation revenues at the end of the fiscal year were reporting at \$209,468, a slight decrease of 1% over last year's operation revenue of \$211,866.

### **Contract Updates**

**Estrella Mountain Regional Park:** Use Management Agreement discussions for an RV Park at Estrella will begin shortly. In addition, Use Management Agreement discussions continue for the horse riding concession, the management of the arena complex, and for the zip line concession.

**All Parks:** Staff continues to work on Special Use Permit (SUP) and Commercial Management Concessions Agreement (CMCA) requirements for the parks as a result of legal review. A CMCA agreement allows vendors such as mobile food carts to operate in the parks.

### **Human Resources Updates**

The Park Supervisor position at White Tanks was filled effective June 28, 2010.

The Executive Assistant for Headquarters was re-posted and interviews were scheduled for June 28 -30, 2010.

Interviews for the Park Maintenance Supervisor at Lake Pleasant are being scheduled.

Interviews for the Interpretive Ranger at San Tan are being scheduled.