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MEMORANDUM

Date: November 2, 2009
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 October 13, 2009 Director's Summary.

Budget

Quarterly Financial Report, July – September FY2009-2010

General Fund (100) – Agency 300 - On the expenditure side, the General Fund (Fund 100, Agency 300) is currently reporting expenditures 6.5% or \$10,817 under the year to date (YTD) budget through 25% of FY2009-10.

There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305 - Enhancement Fund (Fund 241, Agency 305) is currently reporting expenditures 4% or \$34,361 under the YTD budget through 25% of FY2009-10.

Enhancement Fund is currently 26% or \$105,101 under the YTD budget through 25% of FY2009-10. However, we believe we are on target to meet budgeted revenue. In addition to the various user fees charged, the Enhancement Fund receives revenue from contract payments from multiple concessions at Adobe Mountain and other locations. We anticipate a significant payment from Wet-n-Wild in January 2010 as well as our other contracted vendors throughout the course of the year. This fund will continue to be watched closely.

Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302 - Lake Fund (Fund 240, Agency 302) is currently reporting expenditures 1.5% or \$5,982 under the YTD budget.

Revenue is just slightly under budget at 0.04% or \$1,762.

Superintendent Report

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area (SCRCA) - There were 20 interpretive programs performed in October with approximately 180 participants. Park staff participated in the Cave Creek Open Space fundraising equestrian ride and hike-a-thon.

The Park Supervisor hosted a group of Natural Resource managers with a site visit to the Cave Creek Regional Park 2005 fire site to better understand desert wildland fire dynamics.

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Usery Mountain Regional Park - There were 47 interpretive programs performed in October with a total of 1,312 participants with 324 repeat attendees. Scorpions once again stung with popularity this month, everything to do with scorpions...scorpion night hikes and more.

The parks new homeschooling partnership with Arizona Science Center kicked off this October with 5 families learning about "Super Survivors". The Science Center is teaching in the Nature Center and the parks interpretive ranger is teaching on the Nature Center's new Desert Hawk Trail.

The yoga partnership with Inner Vision Yoga studio is continuing to increase each month in attendance.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park - The park offered a full schedule of hike and presentations in October. On the last Saturday of the month the interpretive ranger offered a guided hike into the McDowell Mountain Preserve. This hike was sponsored by the Nature Conservancy and was part of a series into the Fountain Hills Preserve.

The last of the summer night ride series was held on October 23, the event was sponsored by MBAA and Slippery Pig Bike Shop. The fees for medical support were paid by MBAA. A volunteer trail work day, dinner and lunch was held the following day sponsored by Slippery Pig Bike Shop. While the Dust Devil Mountain Bike race kicked off another year of the Dust Devil Series.

The park had 18 volunteers spend a Saturday improving the Sport and Tech Loops of the competitive track.

There were approximately 19 horses removed from the park by either the State Livestock Inspector or a Rancher. Cattle and a bull have also been removed from the park.

The Eagle Scout candidate whose project is to install a small pond behind the Visitor Center is planning a fund raiser in early November to generate the money needed to buy all the material for the pond project.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park - October has been a successful month for events and programs. Despite not having a ranger, the park has been very fortunate to have rangers from other parks such as Usery, Estrella, White Tank, McDowell, Spur Cross and the Desert Outdoor Center (DOC) fill in to help.

The highlight event of the month and the most successful event at the park thus far, was our 3rd Annual Haunted HOWLoween Bash, which attracted **563** spooky event participants. The event could not have been a success without the 75 volunteers from Project Challenge and the countless help including, funding, and staffing by the Friends of San Tan, to put on the event. The DOC rangers added something new and exciting to the event by putting on a critter corral to educate visitors about the wildlife in the desert and remove some of the fears people have about the critters.

Over 200 youths and team leaders from a local youth group came out to lend a hand at the park. The crew removed 82 big bags of buffelgrass from Goldmine Mountain. In addition, the team repaired sections of the Goldmine Trail, picked up trash and salvaged old t-posts from long ago that can be reused as needed by park staff.

Maintenance staff has made improvements along the parking loop near the visitor center. The improvements will help visitors park properly and more efficiently, to maximize parking availability at the park.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park - During October 26 programs were held, including two new programs. There were 335 participants at these programs. A new program this year was participation in "Goodyear in Action Day". This was done with a "Hike with the Mayor". Mayor Cavanaugh from Goodyear came out and hiked with 35 others. Only 40% of those attending had been to Estrella before.

Hosts have started their arrivals which should allow us to have the contact station open every day beginning November 1.

Some of the local High Schools are using Estrella as training grounds for their cross-country teams. One meet has been held and a High School Divisional Meet is scheduled for October 30 and a Junior High School State meet is scheduled for October 31.

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White Tank Mountain Regional Park - There were 22 Interpretive Ranger programs conducted for the month of October, which include 14 outreach programs and 8 in park programs with a total of 969 participants.

The Cactus Cha Cha Run was held at the competitive track on October 9, with 356 runners participating in the event.

On Oct 30, the park had its the Third Annual Halloween Bash - the ultimate kids party with games, snacks, a haunted trail, and anything else we can come up with to make Halloween great, safe and fun for kids.

On November 14, from 9 am- 11am –will be a 'CSI Critters Scene Investigators' Program - Park Rangers and Phoenix Zoo outreach staff team up to provide this wild experience for children ages 7 – 12 years. The program will start with a live animal presentation conducted by the Phoenix Zoo staff. Next the children will explore a secret area of the park looking for clues like bones, tracks, and scat. This will help them identify what animal has been in the area.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park – October saw 51 interpretive ranger park programs conducted for a total of 1,272 participants. 246 people attended various camping activities in the Group Campground.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park partnered with the City of Phoenix for the seventh year, which helps with their adaptive recreation program called Daring Adventures. Lake Pleasant is providing water access to people with disabilities, for the enjoyment of adaptive kayaking. The Interpretive ranger sees that the program has accessibility to the lake and even helps interpret the natural features of the lake.

On the evening of October 3 the Pleasant Paddlers Program featured a full moon kayak tour led by the Interpretive Ranger from Scorpion Bay Marina. Afterwards participants stayed and enjoyed the views and food from the patio of the new floating Dillon's Restaurant.

On October 10 the Visitor Center featured a book signing from the author of a new book on the history of Lake Pleasant. It is part of the series from Arcadia Publishing called "Images of America." Guests had the opportunity to meet local family members of Lake Pleasant's past, including a few descendants of pioneers and miners. Bob Beardsley, the grandson of William Beardsley, who managed the original Lake Pleasant Dam project, was also in attendance. Lake Pleasant archaeology site stewards Truman and Charlotte Peters visited with people about the parks prehistoric history. Betty and Rusty Hastings, descendants from a local cattle ranch and mining family, showed visitors how to pan for those elusive nuggets. With all this going on, the Visitor Center increased sales that day by over 200 % to an all time record day!

October 10 also featured an evening live show of night time desert animals, with three great horn owls being released just before sunset. Wow, we had a crowd of over 100 people watch the birds fly off!

Getting children out into nature by way of our parks is one of our goals. Sunday morning "Get Wet" shoreline exploring hikes have been a great addition to this goal. With the winter coming, this hike will see a temporary end, but don't worry; it will be back next summer!

The Amica Championship triathlon is scheduled at the North entrance on November 1.

Desert Outdoor Center (DOC) - Ladies Day @ the Lake - This event was a successful first-time venture with the Lake Pleasant Sailing Club (LPSC). The event brought about 40 women from throughout Arizona and introduced them to the sport of sailing. 31 programs were taught both in class and on the dock by 18 qualified sailing instructors. The success of this event has led LPSC to book their Christmas Party at the DOC on December 12.

An October 3 wedding event ran smoothly. Both the bride and groom expressed their satisfaction with the facility and staff. Permission was given by the bride and groom as well as professional photographer, to use her photos in DOC and County marketing.

Powder Horn 2009 - DOC hosted the Boy Scout Venturing Powder Horn for 3 days in October. This event is expected to generate more interest in the summer boy scout camps.

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Contract Updates

Adobe Dam Recreational Park – An Agreement has been reached between Parks and Desert Wake Park, LLC for a cable ski lake concession; on November 18 Board of Supervisors' agenda; also requires satisfactory hydrology study which was conducted the week of October 19 to ensure no degradation of dam structure – awaiting results/decision from Flood Control District

Paradise Valley Golf Course - Released an RFP for golf course operation and a Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for November 17 with Proposals due December 23. The new agreement is to be effective February 2011.

750' of netting is being installed at Paradise Valley Golf Course by Maricopa Community College to reduce errant golf balls. (IGA entered into January 2008)

Buckeye Hills Regional Park - Entered into new Special Use Permit for the period October 20, 2009 – October 19, 2010. Staff will continue discussions to enter into long-term agreement.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park – An RFP is to be released November 12 for an RV Park at Estrella and the Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for December 3.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park – An Amended/re-stated IGA with Peoria was approved by Board of Supervisors this month. The new agreement redefines permitting and emergency services responsibilities.

Coming and Going in Human Resources

The vacant Electrician position with the Trails/Construction Crew has been filled with an internal County employee effective November 2, 2009.

The department received a cert list for the vacant Park Maintenance Worker position at Lake Pleasant and interviews will be scheduled soon.