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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 7, 2013
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 since the July 2, 2013, Director's Summary Report.

From the Office of the Director

City of Peoria Inter-governmental Agreement (IGA): Parks has submitted an IGA with the City of Peoria Community Services Department to the Board of Supervisors for their approval. This IGA will allow the City of Peoria to conduct defined recreational opportunities, programs, and events, including but not limited to marketing/promotions, at Lake Pleasant Regional Park. The opportunities or programs will be developed and approved by the County for each project. If deemed by the Director, that the Park is impacted by the program, the City of Peoria will dedicate 10% of gross program revenues of city-sponsored programs to the County.

Conservation Alliance: ASU researchers, Dr. Heather Bateman and her student Beau Rudd, have been working with Uesry Park staff gathering data for their newly-funded study on the effects of trail use on reptiles in the County Regional Park system. The research is being conducted as part of the multi-year Conservation Alliance collaborative which includes the Desert Botanical Gardens, ASU, City of Phoenix and Maricopa County Parks.

Administration

We have officially started a new fiscal year. With the start of FY14, administrative staff has been busy closing out FY13 and moving on to new processes and procedures for FY14. Listed below is a snapshot of administration's activities for July 2013:

Budget Status (through FINAL FY13 close):

- **General Fund (100) – Agency 300:**
 - There are no revenues collected within the General Fund
 - Expenditures are under budget by \$0.72
- **Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:**
 - Enhancement Fund reported revenues 6.5% or \$265,689 over YTD budget
 - Enhancement Fund reported expenditures at 5.94% or \$234,836 under YTD operating budget.
- **Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:**
 - Lake Fund reported revenues 13% or \$260,292 over YTD budget
 - Lake Fund reported operating expenditures under budget by \$1.97
- **Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306:**
 - Spur Cross reported revenues at 5.52% over YTD budget or \$14,709
 - Spur Cross reported operating expenditures under budget at 14.2% or \$36,996

Central Reservations:

- Due to the time of year, reservation and cancellation calls were very slow all month. The only exception was July 1st when calls poured in for reservation for January 2014.

Contracts:

- **Concessionaire Audits:** Experis Financial has completed their audit of Adobe Mountain's 500 Club Golf Course. We are awaiting Concessionaire response to Experis' findings. In July, we initiated the audit for Tres Rios Golf Course. The audit for Scorpion Bay Marina has been postponed until late August.
- **Commercial Management Concession Agreements (CMCA):** There are two additional scuba diving CMCA's on the Board of Supervisor's agenda during August. One of the scuba diving entities is based in Tucson.
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park:** The Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) was released on July 18, 2013, to solicit proposals for the upgrade, management, operation, maintenance and expansion of the existing Sportsfield Complex at Estrella. A mandatory pre-proposal conference was held on August 1, 2013, at Estrella Mountain Regional Park Nature Center and several attendees were present. Discussion ensued regarding available land that may be used for additional sports fields other than what was mentioned in the ITN. Consideration may be given to incorporate a portion of the existing turf area that is under-utilized. It can also create a co-partnership with the Respondent for use of the ramadas that surround the existing turf area. If this occurs, it would shift the maintenance and upkeep of the exiting turf area to the Respondent and allow staff to concentrate on other areas of the Park. To give it full consideration, a review of the Master Plan took place and it was found to be in compliance with this type of usage. An Addendum may be issued once a final decision has been reached.
- **Lake Pleasant Commercial Development:** We have developed the Pre-Development Agreement (PDA) with assistance from CHM (consultant for the Lake Pleasant Development Agreement) and our county attorneys. Red Rock Investments LLC (ITN Respondent) has reviewed the drafted document and we will be discussing their preliminary comments during a teleconference with CHM later this month.
- **Paradise Valley Park:** The final Shared Well Agreement for Arizona Agribusiness and Equine Center, Inc. has been submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Finance Program:

- FY14 is underway and we are officially on a fully electronic revenue and payables system. This is significant for the program as it allows for considerably improved efficiencies and less paperwork.
- A new process for purchasing is also being used which allows more discretion for routine spending at the Park Supervisor level. A great deal of work has been done to identify vendors routinely used for operating supplies. Open purchase orders (PO's) were created to allow purchases to be completed in a timely fashion.

Human Resources:

Welcome:

- Welcome to Kristopher Adkison, Navigational Aide at Lake Pleasant. Kris joins our ranks as of July 8th.
- Welcome to Brad Reed, who started with Parks on July 22nd. Brad joins our Planning and Development Division as our Project Manager.

Farewell:

- San Tan's Interpretive Ranger, Adam Martell, submitted his resignation effective August 1st. We wish him well in his new studies.

Open positions and recruitments:

- The following positions are currently vacant:
 - Contact Station Assistants - Lake Pleasant (1 full-time and 1 temporary position)
Interviews are currently in process for the full-time position
 - Park Office Assistant – Estrella
 - Trails Technician (Trails)
 - Trades Specialist (Trades/7 Crew)
 - Maricopa Trail Manager (Planning and Development)

Information Technology:

- Staff tested mobile computer equipment over the 4th of July at Lake Pleasant. If purchased, this type of equipment will allow for mobile fee enforcement as well as add additional users to assist during busy weekends for entry station usage. These mobile systems run on wireless connections and have full computer and printer options. During the course of the weekend, the unit was used in multiple locations at Lake Pleasant and staff has given the equipment and the concept high praise.
- Work has begun to write a Request for Proposals (RFP) to add Wi-Fi to our campgrounds as an additional service offered to park patrons.

Souvenir Fund:

- July is generally a slower month for the Souvenir Fund. Meetings were held to provide each park with a book of all available items, prices, and the product barcodes. Parks were also provided the opportunity to order display items to help improve the look and feel of the various sales areas.

Volunteer Program:

- The new Volunteer Manual is complete and has been digitized to save paper and provide a more efficient method of delivering the information it provides. The host training presentation will also include all department policies and an acknowledgement of understanding with regards to the policies and the information covered.
- The new host and volunteer uniform designs were finalized and shirts, hats, and name tags were ordered.
- Host/Volunteer report for June 2013:

	June 2012	June 2013
Total Department Hours	1,483	3,479
*Monthly Financial Savings	\$32,567	\$77,014
YTD Total Hours	77,138	94,235
*YTD Financial Savings	\$1,693,950	\$2,083,337
* 2012 Value - \$22.14 per hr 2011 Value - \$21.96 per hr		

Planning and Development (Engineering) Highlights

- **White Tank - Water Supply System Upgrade Project:** This project will update and improve the potable well and booster pump station that services both the park and the library. Five bids were received on July 17, 2013. Issues regarding the low bid are under review. The contract has not yet been awarded.
- **White Tank - RV Dump Station Project:** This project will construct a new waste disposal (dump) station for camper and recreational vehicle (RV) use. The project received permit approval from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). We are working with Maricopa County Environmental Services regarding additional permits.
- **White Tank - Installation of Individual Electrical Hookups at the Campground:** The original contract was terminated by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) in January 2013. Staff has met with four new potential contractors on July 31, 2013. Project proposals were due August 5, 2013.
- **White Tank Master Plan:** The second of two public meetings for the Master Plan Project is scheduled for Saturday, September 7th, from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm at the White Tank Nature Center. Parks GIS staff is providing various types of maps for the Master Plan, including wildlife corridor mapping.
- **Vulture Mountain Update:** Staff is in the process of finalizing the Hassayampa River Preserve Action Plan with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which will set the timeline for transfer of the Preserve Property to Parks.
- **System Wide:** Parks is working with the Facilities Management Department (FMD) and their consultant to perform condition assessments for all park restrooms. Assessments have now been completed for all seventeen restrooms at Lake Pleasant.
- **Trails Crew:** A public meeting for the Lake Pleasant Trails Plan is scheduled for Thursday, September 12th, from 6-8 pm at the Lake Pleasant Operations Center.

Superintendent Reports

Cave Creek Regional Park

- In July, the Park hosted 6 interpretive programs with 94 participants attending. The Clay Mine Hike was the highlight with 34 attendees.
- The maintenance staff continues to clear dried vegetation around the facilities to ensure fire prevention.
- Pet Waste Stations are being installed at the Clay Mine, Go John, Overton and Slate Trailheads.
- Fiscal Year 2013 (interpretive ranger programs, events, and co-sponsored programs) attendance totals: the interpretive ranger and docents led 207 programs with 3,935 visitors in attendance, which included 590 repeat visitors; the interpretive ranger introduced 23 new programs throughout the season and conducted seven outreach programs; there were three annual events hosted at the park with 656 participants and approximately 300 spectators in attendance for the three events; in addition, the park hosted ten co-sponsored programs with 255 visitors participating.

The Desert Outdoor Center (DOC):

- A total of 553 summer school participants, mostly from the Deer Valley School District, were hosted at the DOC in July.
- Arizona Game and Fish Department held their annual Wildlife Management Division awards ceremony at the DOC.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- The ball fields have received extra attention this month. The Mexican Ball League has been playing a couple of games each weekend.
- The Centennial Trail Committee is gathering steam through the Three Rivers Historical Society to obtain funding for the trail.
- There were a total of 15 park programs offered during July with 150 attendees. Wet 'n Wild ticket promotion continues to be popular and boosted attendance to the summer programs. The Interpretive Ranger participated in two outreach events this month reaching approximately 150 youth.
- The Phoenix Zoo conducted annual physical exams on all of the animals in the wildlife display. All of the critters were given a clean bill of health.
- Monsoon storms have brought some rain to Estrella Park. A wind storm on July 28th snapped the tops off of three mid-sized (20 foot) trees.
- New recycled plastic picnic tables are being assembled and placed in the parks 64-acre grass area.
- The heat has brought on issues with turf irrigation lines and valves. Maintenance staff members have been busy with repairs.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park

- Lake Pleasant offered 15 interpretive programs during the month of July to 243 park participants. Highlights of the month included *Try Me Kayaking*, the *Pleasant Paddlers Sunset and Full Moon Paddle*, the *Great Scorpion Hunt, Hike and Splash*, and *The History of Lake Pleasant*.
- In collaboration with the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD) and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), a series of four educational awareness days were conducted at Lake Pleasant over the past two months. The "Pull Your Plug" campaign was established through the AZGFD to promote awareness about invasive Quagga Mussels and the importance of the overall health of our waterways/systems (i.e. protection from spreading fish diseases, maintaining balance in ecosystems, reducing the impact of buildups in the Salt River Project (SRP) and Central Arizona Project (CAP) systems).
- Members from the diving community worked with park staff to create Diver-Down Flag signage. Staff installed the signs in the areas of the 10-Lane Boat Ramp, 4-Lane Boat Ramp, Desert Tortoise Road, and several other key locations in which scuba diving is conducted. The signs will promote awareness of the Diver-Down Flag and remind boaters to keep their distance from the flags, ensuring the safety of the divers in the area. Scuba diving is a growing trend at Lake Pleasant and continues to increase each year. We have also seen an increase in scuba diving concessionaires.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- McDowell hosted two night rides during the month which attracted 123 riders on the Pemberton Trail and 110 riders on the Competitive Track.
- The interpretive ranger offered 20 programs and had an attendance of 361 with 214 returning park visitors.
- The park received over an inch and a half of rain during the second weekend of July. The trails were hit hard by erosion and park staff worked the remainder of the month attempting to mediate that damage.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- During the month of July, San Tan provided 15 interpretive programs with 483 program participants. The highlight program for the month was *Scorpion Scavenger Hunt* which attracted 120 participants.
- San Tan has completed the vision for a brand new critter room thanks to the amazing staff, volunteers, Friends group and Eagle Scout, Alec Drogosz. The interpretive classroom features larger enclosures, a vision cage system with a custom wall wrapping, newly painted walls, and classroom furniture.
- As of August 1st, San Tan suffered a great loss with the resignation of Ranger Adam Martell. Ranger Adam accepted a once in a lifetime opportunity to study sea turtles in Costa Rica. Adam has been with San Tan for three years and has made a huge impact in connecting people with nature. We are very thankful for all of the effort he has put into the programs, hikes, and events. He made San Tan a better place for families to go for a memorable experience. Visitors, volunteers, staff, friends and family were all invited to participate in the "Ranger Adam's Sunset Celebration" hike to bid a heartfelt farewell and find out all the exciting details of what is in store for Ranger Adam.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area:

- In July, the Park hosted five interpretive programs with 37 participants attending. Program highlights included *Sunset Over Spur Cross* with 22 visitors in attendance.
- The interpretive ranger installed a Pet Waste Station between the trailheads.
- Fiscal year 2013 (interpretive ranger programs, events, and co-sponsored programs) attendance totals: the interpretive ranger and docents led 175 programs with 2,578 visitors in attendance; the interpretive ranger introduced 6 new programs throughout the season; in addition, the park hosted one co-sponsored program with 90 visitors participating.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- 15 interpretive ranger programs were held in July with a total of 888 participants and two docent lead programs had 70 participants. Highlights of the month were the popular *Scorpion Hunt* (246) followed by the *All About Scorpions* brown bag lecture (200).
- July showcased the *Kid's Creature Feature Movies* for its fifth year in a row. Pillows, blankets, popcorn and kids filled up our nature center for an afternoon of fun and kid-friendly animal movies. The interpretive ranger began his program with a short interactive nature-based talk that related to the movie. Over 105 movie goers attended the five different movies offered, averaging 21 people per movie. At the end of the movie, the ranger held a drawing for a 4-pack of Wet n' Wild tickets. This promotion has been very popular this summer.
- The *Archery 101* class was moved to the evening at 7:30pm because of the summer heat. The upper archery practice range has lights and makes a good spot to hold the class. 37 participants braved the heat to attend the evening class. These classes teach the basic principles of archery and provide an opportunity to test out equipment provided by the Arizona Game & Fish Department.
- The Usery Mountain Archers continued their Thursday night archery league in July. The league is held every Thursday night at 7pm and is open to all ages. This month, the league averaged 19 adults and 2 youth per week.
- Maintenance staff was busy repairing three leaking water valves in the Buckhorn Campground. A large leak was discovered around three water valves surrounded by asphalt, making it hard to pinpoint the exact location. Maintenance staff had to dig all three valves up to make the needed repairs. After a week of digging and battling the monsoon storms, the 2-inch water line was replaced and the leak fixed. Maricopa Department of Transportation (MDOT) patched the cut asphalt and the campground is back to its original form.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- The interpretive ranger and volunteers at White Tank Park conducted 12 programs with 375 attendees. Some of the programs included *Night Bugs with Kids* and a talk on the Desert Tortoise. The summer's first night trail run, *The Vertigo Night Run*, was held on the Sonoran Loop Competitive Track. Everyone was pleased with the race including the 210 participants who had the opportunity to see the beauty of the park after dark.
- Boy Scout Troop 592 was looking for some hot summer work, so we put them to work cleaning out a drainage ditch behind the ramadas at Waterfall Trail and landscaping around the new kiosk. These teenagers worked hard on a hot summer morning, earning the respect of all the staff.
- The grant to build a tortoise enclosure next to the library was approved by the Board of Supervisors and followed up with a press release.
- The Phoenix Zoo Veterinarian visited the park for their regular check of our interpretive critters this month, giving each a clean bill of health.

Vulture Mountains Cooperative Recreation Management Area:

- Department staff continues to meet with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on items pending final approval from their office.