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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 11, 2011

To: Parks and Recreation Department Commissioners

From: R.J. Cardin, Director *R.J.C.*

Re: Director's Summary of Current Events

Listed below are issues that the department has been involved with since the August 9, 2011 Director's Summary.

Budget

General Fund (100) – Agency 300 - On the expenditure side, the General Fund is currently reporting expenditures 9% or \$16,746 under the year to date (YTD) budget. There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305 – The Enhancement Fund is currently reporting revenue at 14% or \$43,002 under the YTD budget. Enhancement Fund is currently 8% or \$46,235 under the YTD operating budget for expenditures.

Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302 – The Lake Fund is currently reporting revenues at 3% or \$10,966 over the YTD budget. Lake Fund is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 5% or \$17,371.

Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306 - Spur Cross is currently reporting revenues at 47% or \$9,814 under the YTD budget. Spur Cross is reporting operating expenditures under budget at 18% or \$9,467.

Superintendent Reports

Adobe Dam Regional Park – The Park's Victory Lane is sponsoring several one day cross country events starting Sept 1 - November 30.

Cave Creek Regional Park – The Park hosted 3 programs with a total of 88 visitors including Reptile Feeding, Venomous Creatures and the always popular Moonlight Hike.

Hands on Greater Phoenix provided volunteers to paint grills and spread decomposed granite in the campground sites.

Desert Outdoor Center – The Outdoor Center is currently planning Aquatic programs with the Boy Scouts of America.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park – The Park Ranger staff has been pitching in to offer programs at Estrella in the absence of an interpretive ranger. Ranger B from Usery offered his famous brown-bag program, Ranger Shelley from the DOC led a hike to a petroglyph site and Ranger Amy from McDowell shared her "Story Time" programs.

The Park hosted its first "Best Friends" hike of the season which welcomed 30 two legged and 15 four legged participants.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park – The Park participated in the National Public Lands Day Clean Up with 150 participants helping collect refuse on the shoreline and the north area of the park, while scuba divers worked in the water. Because of the seasonal low water, it was a great opportunity to clear out refuse in Humbug Bay, which totaled 15 bags of garbage.

The restrooms are undergoing deep cleaning to ready them for the winter season along with weeding in the 10-lane areas.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park - The Park offered 19 programs with 154 participants, an increase in both the number of programs and participants. One of the new programs offered in September was a night viewing of wildlife using the recently donated night vision monoculars.

The summer night ride series finished up with 161 riders on the final two night rides in September. Even though one evening had heavy showers, 99 riders rode on.

On September 10th the Pump Track held a reopening celebration. The Arizona Gravity Riders adopted the pump track and pledged to rework some of the corners, table tops and routinely maintain the track. Donated merchandise was raffled off and the sale of raffle tickets generated enough money for the Gravity Riders to purchase new tools and a tool box.

Slippery Pig Bike Shop in Fountain Hills assisted the Park with an introductory program on mountain biking including both simple repairs, flat repairs and riding techniques.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park – The Park offered 18 interpretive programs to a delighted 490 program participants. The highlights for the month included the Scorpion Scavenger Hunt, Sunset Hike and Afterschool Archery.

The Park hosted its annual Memorial Ceremony to honor fallen Arizona soldiers from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars with approximately 200 people attending the candlelit service. Bryan Martyn, Pinal County Board of Supervisor, emceed the festivities.

An Eagle Scout project added a concrete edging to the Buddy Pond along with other enhancements and rehabilitated damaged sections of park land by planting cacti in various areas of need.

The San Tan Interpretive Ranger attended a special archaeological training session at the Perry Mesa Symposium.

The San Tan Park Supervisor met with representatives from the Arizona Department of Water Resources and Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) about a proposed GPS CORS system at San Tan.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area – Spur Cross hosted 8 programs with 165 participants. Programs included Dragonflies of Spur Cross, Nature Walk, Stargazing, Rock Art of Spur Cross, Healthy Hiking, Ruins of Spur Cross, Rocks and Streams Walk and the Crayfish Hike & Workshop.

Park Supervisor John Gunn retired after 10 years of service.

Usery Mountain Regional Park - The Park offered 18 interpretive programs and 17 yoga classes in September totaling 846 participants with 500 as repeat attendees. The Scorpion Hunts, Flashlight Night Hikes, and Movie Night in the Park are always summer evening crowd-pleasers. The Brown-bag lectures have shown increased attendance every month with a new topic is introduced each month to encourage return participants.

The popular home school program this September had a record number of families signing up. Children and parents, 40 total participants, attended morning classes with the Arizona Science Center instructor and later joined the park's interpretive ranger for an outdoor experience about Sonoran Desert Geology. An afternoon session has now been added to accommodate more home school families and classes will be offered each month through April, excluding December.

The new popular archery class has been filling up two months ahead of each class. A second class will be offered this fall. All participants are giving high ratings for the new class. Park staff will meet again with an archery coordinator from the AZGFD (Arizona Game and Fish Department) to design the "Next Step" in the archery programs.

The Park Supervisor and maintenance team are working on the mitigation project east of the Nature Center restoring the desert wash and increasing wildlife habitat. New irrigation drip line and wildlife viewing benches have been installed and the trees, shrubs and cacti have been planted. The last phase of the project is to incorporate rock work to lessen erosion.

An Eagle Scout project completed the painting of two picnic ramadas the same green color as the Nature Center blending the ramadas into the natural colors of the desert.

Staff continues to receive positive feedback about the Point-of-Sale and many campers are making Spring reservations.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park – The Ranger completed 19 programs with 720 attendees, out of which 9 of the programs and 420 of the attendees were Outreaches.

September was another great revenue month generating \$18,122.20 or a 67% increase over last year.

The Parks Office Assistant has had great success meeting with business owners in the West Valley and marketing the Park, and also obtaining donations for the CCC Fangtastic Fall Festival.

The Nature Center and Library won Crescordia Award for Environmental Technologies as well as 2 awards of Merit from Valley Forward for Education/ Communication and Landscape

Vulture Mountain – Park staff met with EPG to finalize the timeline for the next steps. Staff is also finalizing the Cooperative Management Agreement with the Bureau of Land Management, including meeting with the Town of Wickenburg and Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce.

Engineering Update

The White Tank host sites electrical project has been designed by Bridgers & Paxton & plans have been submitted to Maricopa County Building & Safety.

Contract Update

The Board of Supervisors approved the Co-Sponsorship Program – a mechanism for Parks to co-sponsor events with other organizations. This allows both parties to present recreational or educational opportunities to Park patrons that independently, neither party has the resources. The Board approved co-sponsors with Cabelas and Northside Horse Outfitters; and authorized the Parks' Director to enter into future agreements without Board approval.

The Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with CPT Zipline, LLC to develop, construct, operate and maintain a zipline concession at Lake Pleasant with the option to expand to Estrella. The concession will be an additional source of revenue for Parks, but more importantly, add a new dimension to the recreational amenities offered to Park patrons – one that will be fun as well as educational in that an ecotour will be incorporated into the amenity.

Coming and Goings in Human Resources

The Volunteer Coordinator position at Headquarters was filled effective September 19, 2011.

The summer help assignment for the two part-time Recreation Assistants at Lake Pleasant ended September 4, 2011.

The Estrella Interpretive Ranger position is now vacant. The job description had minor updates and is currently awaiting approval from OMB so recruitment can begin.

The Park Planner-Trails position with the Maricopa Trails is now vacant and the job description is being reviewed for possible updates. Once this is completed, recruitment will begin.

Interviews are currently being scheduled for the vacant Trails Technician position with the Trails Crew.

Interviews are currently being scheduled for the vacant Trades Specialist-Welder position with the Construction Crew.