



Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department

MEMORANDUM

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Date: January 14, 2021
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 **November and December 2020**.

Bureau of Reclamation:

Staff is currently working with the Bureau of Reclamation on an amendment to the 1990 Management Agreement (MA) for Lake Pleasant Regional Park to exercise the renewal option of fifty (50) years early (among other administrative items). As it stands now, the MA states the renewal is not exercisable until the year 2039. This has the potential of stifling large concessionaire developments who need a longer-term concession agreement to amortize the cost of development and realize a reasonable return on investment.

The Park System Plan, Parks Vision 2030:

Continuing the Legacy continues to move forward. During the end of January and early February, we will conduct six focus group meetings with more than 150 regional and special interest stakeholders from across the county. The effort is to solicit input from key professionals, non-profits and other interest groups on the future of Regional Parks, Open Space, and Trails in Maricopa County.

Areas of discussion will generally revolve around the following questions:

1. Are you personally concerned about the current and future loss of open space and how that impacts the quality of life for residents in your region?
2. Do you see regional scale open space protection/conservation as a priority for your residents?
3. What do you see as your agency's roles in facilitating a system of regional parks and open space?
4. What is your agency currently doing to address this issue? This could be planning efforts, acquisition, etc.
5. What limiting factors are preventing your agency from moving forward in addressing regional park and open space acquisition, development and conservation?
6. What can we do collectively to better address these issues and implement action on a regional scale?
7. How important are trails, trailheads, and regional trail connectivity to your community?
8. How important is the protection of wildlife corridors to your community?
9. What are some key recreational activities or outdoor experiences the regional park system could assist with to support the needs of your community members?
10. Generally speaking, what do we need to do collectively over the next 10 years to make sure our region is known as a desirable place to live in relation to adequate regional parks, open space and trails?

Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

Date/Status	Tracking Number	Summary
11/04/2020 Approved	C-30-16-002-M-01	Termination of CMCA with South by Southwest Adventures, LLC: Approve the termination of the CMCA with Concessionaire entered on July 23, 2015. Termination will be effective as of December 31, 2020.
11/04/2020 Approved	C-30-17-010-M-01	Termination of CMCA with Striper Adventures, LLC: Approve the termination of the CMCA with Concessionaire entered on November 16, 2016. Termination will be effective as of December 31, 2020.
11/04/2020 Approved	C-30-19-011-M-02	Change Order No. 2 with EPS Group: Approve change order #2 to extend this competition impractical procurement with EPS by 307 days to 12/31/2020. This time extension is necessary due to the extensive environmental review process required by the United States Army Corps of Engineers to design the Vulture Mountain Recreation Area in and around the

		park washes and waterways protected under the Waters of the USA, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
11/04/2020 Approved	C-30-06-12-1-05	Amendment to Use Management Agreement with Scorpion Bay Holdings, LLC: Approve and execute Amendment Two to allow Concessionaire to offer modified and additional recreational services to the public, delete first right of refusal of certain property, add certain property for dry boat storage, change the payment fee schedule, and make other administrative corrections. Additional recreational services, among other items, include onshore and offshore rental cabins and other short-term lodging facilities, including additional support facilities and amenities related to the provision of lodging services. The addition of 22 acres of land will allow Concessionaire to construct a dry boat storage complex. Administrative changes include an increase in Concessionaire's payment fees and Concessionaire's reimbursement of certain utility fees to the County. The Concessionaire shall also be responsible for all upgrades, future expansion, or upgraded services to the well water delivery system as required due to future improvements, at the Concessionaire's sole expense. All development costs will be at the expense of the Concessionaire.
11/04/2020 Approved	C-30-08-034-1-08	Amendment to Use Management Agreement with EPR Parks, LLC: Approve and execute Amendment Four to the UMA with EPR Parks, LLC, known as Hurricane Harbor – Phoenix and is currently managed by Six Flags Entertainment Corporation. The Amendment sets forth the definition for each of the development phases. Phase I and II have been completed to the County's satisfaction. The Phase III proposed development is within Parcel 2 and will allow Concessionaire to construct a fenced employee parking area and free up additional parking for customers.
11/18/2020 Approved	C-06-21-265-X-00	Donation Report: Accept the monthly donation report from Parks and Recreation for October 2020 for a cash value of \$376.25.
12/9/2020 Approved	C-06-21-297-X-00	Reappointment of Jack Stapley to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission representing Member-at-Large: Term of service will be effective January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2022.
12/9/2020 Approved	C-06-20-311-X-00	Appointment of John Crane to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission representing District 2: Term of service will be effective January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2022.
12/09/2020 Approved	C-30-21-014-X-00	Termination of Several CMCA's: Approve the termination of the CMCA per the list below and delegate authority to the Director of MCPRD or his designee to provide prior written notice to each Concessionaire to terminate. Terminations will be effective as of December 31, 2020. These terminations are due to Maricopa County and each Concessionaire entering into a new CMCA effective as of January 1, 2021, covering the same concessions as stated in the Agreement and requiring the Concessionaires to pay the greater of an annual minimum fee or an annual fee based on 10% of gross revenue. In Resolution C-30-18-016-M-00, the Board delegated signature authority to the MCPRD Director to enter into new CMCA's with Concessionaires. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arizona Fishing 4 Flathead Cat, LLC dba Flathead Ed Adventures, C-30-14-030-M-00, 05/07/2014 • Arizona Fishing Guides LLC, C-30-17-004-M-00, 08/03/2016 • Arizona Great Adventures Fishing, LLC, C-30-11-019-3-01, 10/06/2010 • Arizona Mountain Biking, C-30-15-015-M-00, 01/13/2015 • Black Mountain Adventures, LLC, C-30-16-012-M-00, 02/17/2016 • Cactus Adventures, C-30-13-015-M-00, 03/27/2013 • Cliff Creek Outfitters, Inc. dba Desert Voyages, C-30-13-014-M-01, 03/27/2013 • DVMP, LLC dba The Dive Shop, C-30-14-005-M-00, 08/21/2014 • Fat Bike, LLC dba Sonoran Outdoor Adventures, C-30-17-005-M-00, 08/17/2016

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fins Up Scuba, LLC, C-30-15-024-M-00, 04/22/2016 • Inland Water Divers, LLC, C-30-13-027-M-00, 06/19/2013 • No Limits Scuba, C-30-13-021-M-00, 04/10/2013 • Pedal Therapy, C-30-15-007-M-00, 12/03/2014 • Saguaro Diving & Sports, Inc., C-30-11-004-3-02, 08/04/2010 • Scottsdale Scuba, C-30-14-023-M-00, 03/27/2014 • Scuba Professionals of Arizona, C-30-18-004-M-00, 07/30/2014 • Sea 2 Sea Scuba, LLC, C-30-18-004-M-00, 09/20/2017 • Wild Bunch Desert Guides, LLC, C-30-16-016-M-00, 04/08/2015
12/09/2020 Approved	C-30-21-012-X-00	Use Management Agreement with Phoenix Kart Racing Association, Inc: Approve the UMA for the promotion, development, management, improvement, operation, and maintenance of the existing track kart racing facility at Adobe Dam Regional Park for a term of 20 years. The agreement may be renewed for a period of up to three additional 5-year terms.
12/09/2020 Approved	C-30-21-013-X-00	Use Management Agreement with Adobe Mountain Speedway, LLC: Approve the UMA for the promotion, development, management, improvement, operation, and maintenance of the existing track kart racing facility at Adobe Dam Regional Park for a term of 20 years. The agreement may be renewed for a period of up to three additional 5-year terms.
12/09/2020 Approved	C-30-11-041-3-02	Termination of CMCA with Arizona Outdoor Specialists, Inc: Approve the termination and delegate authority to the Director of Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department to provide prior written termination notice Termination will be effective December 1, 2020. This termination is requested by the Concessionaire, as the Concessionaire has merged with Recreational Equipment, Inc. REI subsequently entered into a long-term Joint Program and Marketing Agreement with Maricopa County (C-30-20-009-M-00), covering the same concession activities in the original Agreement, among other things.
12/09/2020 Approved	C-30-15-021-M-00	Termination of CMCA with Recreational Equipment, Inc: Approve the termination and delegate authority to the Director of Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department to provide prior written termination notice Termination will be effective December 1, 2020. This termination is due to Maricopa County and Concessionaire entering into a new long-term Joint Program and Marketing Agreement (C-30-20-009-M-00), covering the same concession activities.
12/09/2020 Approved	C-30-21-015-X-00	Resolution by Maricopa County in Support of Parks and Recreation Application for the Shooting Range Development Grant: Approve and execute the Board Resolution in support of Parks and Recreation filing an application for an Arizona Game and Fish Shooting Range Development Grant for General Joe Foss Shooting Complex at Buckeye Hills Lead Abatement and Berm Maintenance in the not-to-exceed amount of \$50,000. Also, authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation Department to sign all documents related to these grant funds, as applicable. If a grant award is made, the authority to accept the funds will remain with the Board of Supervisors.
1/06/2021 Approved	C-06-20-358-X-00	Reappointment of Eric Mears to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission representing District 3: The term of service will be effective January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2022.
1/06/2021 Approved	C-06-20-357-X-00	Donation Report: Accept the monthly donation report from Parks and Recreation for November 2020 for a cash value of \$472.06.

Administration

Contract Administration:

- **Estrella – Tres Rios Golf Course:** Following the BOS approval of the assignment to Southwest Golf Management (SWGGM) on September 16, 2020, SWGGM has been hard at work making improvements to the

course, including the tasks of over-seeding. SWGM projected they would spend \$1.3 million in the first year and they have already surpassed that amount within the four months they have managed the facility. They were able to open the course to the public on November 23. For the seven days they were open in November, there were 596 rounds of golf played. Staff has received positive feedback from the public.

- **Adobe Dam:** A Letter of Expression of Interest (LOI) for the management, operations, and maintenance of a model airpark complex or alternate recreation facility was issued on October 15 through our website and BIDSYNC, with a response date of December 3. Staff is currently negotiating a new agreement.
- **Lake Pleasant Regional Park:** A Letter of Expression of Interest (LOI) for the development, operation, management, and maintenance of Lake Pleasant Commercial Property at State Route 74 was issued on December 3 through our website and BIDSYNC, with a response date of March 1, 2021.
- **Sponsorship and Partnering Program:** On February 1, 2018, an invitation to negotiate was issued for partnering with the County to assist Parks with the ongoing challenges of developing new programs and expanding existing park and recreation programs, opportunities and initiatives that improve the quality of life for park visitors and provide responsible stewardship of our natural and cultural resources. This solicitation will continue to be open until February 1, 2022. Two responses have been received, REI and Aravaipa Running.
 - REI Joint Program and Marketing Agreement was executed in March 2020. Due to COVID-19, REI suspended all public activities. Recently, they submitted a COVID-19 Plan and we are gearing up for an exciting 2021 with REI.
 - Negotiations with Aravaipa Running were finalized, and their Joint Program and Marketing Agreement is on the January 27 Board of Supervisor's agenda for approval.
- **Commercial Management Concession Agreements (CMCA):** As part of an effort to streamline the process for the private sector entering into CMCA's, and to expedite offering new and enhanced services for park visitors, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) adopted a resolution in 2018 that delegated to the Park's Director the authority to execute, on behalf of the County, any CMCA that has been executed by the concessionaire. The new agreement sets forth a prepaid minimum annual payment of \$225 or 10% of gross revenues, with a minimum of \$225 due by February 1st of the present contract year. The year-end reconciliation for the 10% will be done the following January. Previous agreements did not have a minimum and had various rate schedules, with quarterly invoicing and reconciliation.

After the success of ten new CMCA's since 2018, we offered the new agreement to all remaining CMCA concessionaires. All but three have decided to terminate their existing agreement and enter into the new agreement, effective January 1, 2021. Parks now has 34 executed new agreements, three pending transition into the new agreement and three remaining concessionaires under the older agreement.

With the Delegation of Authority, only the submission of a fiscal year recap is placed on the BOS Agenda, saving administration time for both Park's and Clerk of the Board's office. In addition, Park's contract administrator and finance staff will save valuable administrative time as there is no longer quarterly accounting functions (saving approximately 120 hours a year).

Financial/Budget Status FY2020-2021: (through October close)

Department		Fund		Appropriation Unit		Expenditures			Revenue		
Code	Name	Code	Name	Code	Name	Appropriation	Detail Budget	Variance	Appropriation	Detail Budget	Variance
D300	Parks and Recreation	100	General	OPER	Operating	\$861,313	\$861,313	\$0			
D300	Parks and Recreation	200	Coronavirus Relief Fund	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	\$46,451	\$132,519	(\$86,068)	\$46,451	\$129,830	(\$83,379)
D300	Parks and Recreation	225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0			
D300	Parks and Recreation	225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	OPER	Operating	\$308,476	\$280,803	\$27,673	\$323,200	\$333,285	(\$10,085)
D300	Parks and Recreation	230	Parks and Recreation Grants	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	\$45,438	\$45,438	\$0	\$45,438	\$45,438	\$0
D300	Parks and Recreation	230	Parks and Recreation Grants	OPER	Operating					\$34	(\$34)
D300	Parks and Recreation	239	Parks Souvenir	OPER	Operating	\$436,088	\$314,583	\$121,505	\$436,088	\$316,797	\$119,291
D300	Parks and Recreation	240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	\$895,000	\$160,985	\$734,015			
D300	Parks and Recreation	240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	OPER	Operating	\$3,614,456	\$3,556,849	\$57,607	\$3,614,456	\$4,170,677	(\$556,221)
D300	Parks and Recreation	241	Parks Enhancement	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project	\$1,685,000	\$1,048,053	\$636,947	\$2,594	\$5,171	(\$2,577)
D300	Parks and Recreation	241	Parks Enhancement	OPER	Operating	\$6,624,881	\$6,624,881	\$0	\$6,624,881	\$6,839,450	(\$214,569)
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	OPER	Operating	\$30,490	\$26,850	\$3,640	\$50,174	\$40,364	\$9,810
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	WMD3	Daisy Mountain And Trails	\$135,000	\$135,000	\$0			

*negative for revenue is GOOD

Department		Fund		Appropriation Unit		Structural Balance OPERATING			Forecasted ROLL TO FUND BALANCE		
Code	Name	Code	Name	Code	Name	Revenue Budget	Forecast Expenditures	Balance	Revenue Forecast	Forecast Expenditures	ROLL
D300	Parks and Recreation	100	General	OPER	Operating						
D300	Parks and Recreation	200	Coronavirus Relief Fund	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project						
D300	Parks and Recreation	225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project						
D300	Parks and Recreation	225	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation	OPER	Operating	\$323,200	\$280,803	\$42,397	\$333,285	\$280,803	\$52,482
D300	Parks and Recreation	230	Parks and Recreation Grants	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project						
D300	Parks and Recreation	230	Parks and Recreation Grants	OPER	Operating	\$0	\$0	\$0			
D300	Parks and Recreation	239	Parks Souvenir	OPER	Operating	\$436,088	\$314,583	\$121,505	\$316,797	\$314,583	\$2,214
D300	Parks and Recreation	240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project						
D300	Parks and Recreation	240	Lake Pleasant Recreation Services	OPER	Operating	\$3,614,456	\$3,556,849	\$57,607	\$4,170,677	\$3,556,849	\$613,828
D300	Parks and Recreation	241	Parks Enhancement	NRNP	Non Recurring Non Project						
D300	Parks and Recreation	241	Parks Enhancement	OPER	Operating	\$6,624,881	\$6,624,881	\$0	\$6,839,450	\$6,624,881	\$214,569
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	OPER	Operating	\$50,174	\$26,850	\$23,324	\$40,364	\$26,850	\$13,514
D300	Parks and Recreation	243	Parks Donations	WMD3	Daisy Mountain And Trails						

Point of Sale System (POS): Park staff and Park Hosts spent most of November and early December training and testing the new Point of Sale system. The system went live on 12/15/20. This new system offers enhanced camping reservation and reporting options, a robust inventory and point-of-sale process, improved annual pass functionality, and overall stronger reporting capabilities.

Human Resources

- **Welcome/Promotions:**
 - Eric Baker – Park Maintenance, Lake Pleasant 12/2/2020
 - Rhylan Gosselin – Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant 12/4/2020
 - David Taylor – Park Maintenance, Lake Pleasant 12/7/2020
 - Robert Dean – Contact Station Assistant Temp, Lake Pleasant 12/11/2020
 - Michael Miller – Contact Station Assistant Temp, Lake Pleasant 1/7/2021
 - Bruce Zavoda – Contact Station Assistant Temp, McDowell 1/6/2021
 - Eileen Baden – Park and Open Space Planner, HQ 1/11/2021
- **Promotions/Position Changes:**
 - Kara Currie-Gonzalez – from Procurement Specialist to Finance Support Supervisor
 - Ryan Dunning – from Maintenance Worker at White Tank to Navigational Aide Specialist at Lake Pleasant
 - Cassidy Solper – from Lake Pleasant Contact Station to Estrella Office Assistant
- **Farewells**
 - Bryan Kobold – Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant 11/18/2020
 - Kyle Randall – Park Maintenance Supervisor, Lake Pleasant (transferred to MDOT) 12/14/2020
 - Elizabeth Miller – Contact Station Assistant Temp, Cave Creek 1/1/2021
 - Alan Ockenfels – Trails Development Supervisor (retired) 1/7/2021
- **Vacancies**
 - Water Specialist – Candidate selected, offer accepted, scheduled to start 1/18/2021
 - Procurement Specialist – Interviews held 1/8/2021
 - Contact Station Assistants (4), Lake Pleasant – Interviews held 1/12/2021
 - Trails Development Supervisor – Job description under review
 - Park Maintenance Supervisor – Job description under review
 - Interpretive Ranger, McDowell – On hold
 - Trails Specialist – on hold
 - Parks Education Supervisor, DOC – On hold
 - Park Maintenance Worker, DOC – On hold
 - Interpretive Ranger, DOC – On hold

Training Hours (Staff and Core Volunteers)

TheHUB Training							
Safety	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total YTD
FY21	542.97	144.78	113.51	144.04	103.66	65.04	1,114.00
FY20	165.95	225.92	73.05	285.34	177.69	191.15	1,119.10
Other*	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total YTD
FY21	21.28	18.29	36.96	84.37	14.7	17.75	193.35
FY20	37.50	92.18	48.79	54.71	17.07	19.53	269.78

* Other (new employee orientation, policy review, diversity, job skills, professional development, personal development)



Safety Tailgate trainings

FY21	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
TOTAL SESSIONS	7	6	6	6	6	4
TOTAL ATTENDANCE	38	30	40	38	59	28

Volunteer Hours (FY21 through December 2020):

TOTAL Volunteer Hours, by month									Year End %
	July	August	September	October	November	December	YTD Total	Year End Total	Change
FY21 - All Hours	2,800	2,738	2,699	8,598	11,094	11,790	39,719	39,719	
FY20 - All Hours	1,900	1,955	3,884	7,020	10,497	12,463	37,719	89,750	17%
FY19 - All Hours	2,754	2,824	2,968	4,373	9,230	10,390	32,539	76,935	-23%
Financial Impact of Volunteers, by Month									Hourly Rate
	July	August	September	October	November	December	YTD Total	Year End Total	
FY21 Financial Impact	\$71,204	\$69,627	\$68,636	\$218,647	\$282,120	\$299,820	\$1,010,054	\$1,010,054	\$27.20
FY20 Financial Impact	\$48,329	\$49,703	\$98,758	\$178,512	\$266,947	\$316,943	\$959,192	\$2,282,340	\$25.43
FY19 Financial Impact	\$67,996	\$69,725	\$73,280	\$107,969	\$227,889	\$256,529	\$803,388	\$1,899,515	\$24.69

Special Days of Service event listings:	Date	Attendance	Hours
Lake - Boy Scout - Clean-Up	11/14/2020	41	205
San Tan - Corporate - Trail Maintenance	12/1/2020	6	24
Usery - Trail Work	12/6/2020	4	12
Cave Creek - Volunteer 13K	12/9/2020	2	10
Usery - Volunteer 13K	12/16/2020	1	4

Planning and Development Division

Project Management

- The Department Project Manager (PM) has completed the four new Lake Pleasant Group Campground host sites. The project includes, electric, water, and septic systems to support the site. This project was made possible with CARES funds allocated to help manage the Park more efficiently.
- The PM also completed a second project component with the CARES funds to better manage incoming Lake Pleasant traffic. Staff can better secure the park with the installation of solar powered entrance gates at both the main park and north Lake Pleasant entries.

Trades Crew

- Department electricians completed LED lighting conversions at the Nature Centers at Usery and Estrella Mountain Regional Parks.
- The Trades Crew completed pipe rail and gate improvements at the 176th Street alignment along the north side of McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Numerous cuts in the fence and illegal park entry necessitated the improvements.
- The Trades Crew replaced a septic pump at Pallet Loop at Lake Pleasant Park. The corrosive environment in pump vaults can be damaging to pumps. The crew will be evaluating pump vaults for appropriate venting to ensure the vaults and pumps have adequate venting to increase the service life of the pumps.
- Department electricians replaced a 300amp circuit breaker for the new chiller project at the Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant Regional Park.

Trails Crew

- The Trails Crew Supervisor Allen Ockenfels retired Jan 7th after 20 years with the department. Allen has worked on many projects and trails through the years but remembers the Yavapai Point Trail at Lake Pleasant Regional Park as one of his favorites.

Maricopa Trail, Sun Circle, and Trail Facilities:

- Agreement preparation/negotiations:
 - City of Phoenix – IGA for Segment 1 Sun Circle Trail was sent back to Phoenix Street Department for review on 10/26/20; Segment 7 is in review by Maricopa County Attorney's Office and Real Estate Department.
 - ADOT – Submitted permit for SR85 crossing Segment 33; waiting for ADOT approval.
 - Daisy Mountain – Met with State Land 6/18/20. They propose a SLUP instead of an easement.
 - AZGFD – Segment 33 draft License in review by MCAO and Real Estate.
 - WAPA (Western Area Power Administration) License applications (4) for Segment 76 submitted 10/28/20.
 - CAP (Central AZ Project) – License application for Segment 76 submitted 12/15/2020.
 - Avondale – Segment 1 route determination coordination is in process.
 - MCFCD (Flood Control District) – Permits submitted for Segment 27 and 35.
- Maintenance
 - Segments 13, 14, 16 and 18 - Completed tread repair, grooming and brushing November and December 2020.

- Segment 22 – Sears Fire burned north eight miles of Trail; submitted claim to Risk Management for two Youth Corps crews to do erosion mitigation.
- Trailheads
 - Segment 27 – Bush Highway – Received 60% plans from MCDOT November 2020. Construction scheduled for early 2021 (MCDOT).
 - Segment 11 – Installed display panel for new kiosk at Sun Valley Trailhead December 2020.
- Route Determination – Segment 77 (Vulture Mountain to Lake Pleasant) and Segment 76 (White Tank to Vulture Mountain) - Parks' management selected primary routes in August 2020. Currently meeting with landowners (Bureau of Land Management, Central AZ Project, Bureaus of Reclamation, and Western Area Power Administration).

Natural Resources

- The Department will be hosting two *Desert Defender* training sessions and several invasive species removal events this spring at Spur Cross Conservation Area and at Utery, White Tank, Estrella, and Cave Creek Regional Parks. The *Desert Defender* program is in partnership with CAZCA (Central Arizona Conservation Alliance) and trains volunteers to identify, map, and record locations of invasive species on smart phones using the County Park collector application.

Parks Operations Report

Parks Special Use Permits (FY21 through December):

	FY21	FY20	FY19	FY18	FY17	FY16	FY15	FY14	FY13	FY12
# of SUPs	42	80	101	105	97	117	97	117	77	94
# of Participants	2,530	16,852	20,099	18,018	16,960	18,297	18,094			
% of change from Previous Year										
	FY21	FY20	FY19	FY18	FY17	FY16	FY15	FY14	FY13	FY12
# of SUPs	-48%	-21%	-4%	8%	-17%	21%	-17%	52%	-18%	
# of Participants	-85%	-16%	12%	6%	-7%	1%				

Park Visitor Attendance (through December 2020):

- Report found on page 11

Cave Creek Regional Park

- The campgrounds have been full throughout November and December. The Nature Center has seen an increase in merchandise sales in the gift shop.
- We had two employees each month from other departments sign up for the County's 13K Volunteer program to complete maintenance of the landscape around the Nature Center and Amphitheater in November and December.
- The staff has been training new park hosts for the season.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park

- An Eagle Scout and staff completed plumbing the butterfly garden to help pollinators and the public enjoys the nature center area.
- There were two Special Use Permit events in the park in November. The running event had 63 people, and the mountain bike event had 121 people. Note: All events or programs held in the parks are done with COVID precautions in place.
- Game camera test locations continue to be studied for wildlife species found in the park. Notable images are used in programming and posted on Facebook.
- Staff and hosts have been busy with park grooming, cleaning restrooms, ramadas, and tree trimming.

Hassayampa River Preserve

- The maintenance worker and volunteers began remodeling the small pond in the garden in front of the visitor center. The Friends of Hassayampa is funding this project.
- The Preserve saw continued increased visitation during November, especially on the weekends. Fall colors, beautiful weather, and a few rare bird sightings have brought many visitors out. The Thanksgiving holiday weekend was the busiest of the month.

- The Preserve's septic tanks were pumped this month and routine maintenance was conducted to prepare for the busy season.
- Most interpretive programs at the Preserve are reaching sign-up capacity. The interpretive ranger also hosted a *Discovery Table* on the trail, highlighting the Preserve's 100+ year-old California fan palms' cultural and natural history. Visitors were able to stop by the station, socially distanced, and interact with the ranger.
- The *100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge* began in November and the interpretive ranger-led one after Thanksgiving Day hike to help visitors walk off their Thanksgiving meal and get some challenge miles. The Preserve participated in a scavenger hunt for *100 Mile Challenge* participants to engage and motivate them during this trying year.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park

- Annual Bald Eagle Closure has been implemented and will remain intact until June 15, unless otherwise posted. Eagle activity has already been observed at several sites - hopefully, indicative of a successful year for fledglings.
- Discovery Center was re-opened on November 6, 2020, and will be available Friday thru Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Social distancing and other COVID-19 related practices have been implemented for the safety of the public and staff.
- Materials have come in, and staff continues to work on prepping sites for the designated primitive camping rollout in December.
- Maintenance staff installed campsites within the Earthen Spillway for the new designated primitive campsites in January.
- Staff is working with Flood Control, Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), and Bureau of Reclamation on a potential new cable and float barrier strategy within the Agua Fria riverbed of the conservation area. The strategy is considered to be a first of its kind and is intended to keep vehicles on a designated roadway in the conservation area.
- MCDOT donated (re-purposed) approximately 50 old jersey barriers for the park to utilize in some of the more remote areas, to keep people/vehicles out of undesignated areas.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- Park staff completed a Saguaro Transect in the area burned by wildfire in August. This data will be compiled and used to inform future natural management decisions in this area.
- Our campsites and restrooms in E.I. Rowland campground are receiving daily compliments about their impeccable cleanliness with the hosts' return.
- All septic tanks were pumped this month in preparation for the upcoming busy camping and special event season.
- Three special events took place in November 2020:
 - New to the park, the *Jr Race Series* took place for 160 middle and high school mountain bikers.
 - *Lead, Follow or Get Out of My Way* endurance ride brought 78 horseback riders into the park.
 - 410 participants rode in the 6 or 12 Hours of *Fury* mountain bike race, trying to complete as many loops as possible in this time-limited race.
- No burn days enacted due to high pollution advisories continue to limit fire usage throughout the month.
- New toilets were installed in restroom #10 in campground South Loop.
- Another break in the main water line was located and repaired by the Trades crew.
- Lighting in the maintenance compound was improved with LED installation.
- Relocated dryer in maintenance compound for the exhaust to work more efficiently and make hosts happy.
- Two large special events were held in December.
 - Frenzy trail runs/Mayhem night runs/Frenzy bike race with 727 participants enjoying the trails and camping.
 - *Dawn to Dusk* bike race brought 439 people into the park.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park

- The Trades Crew helped avert a safety issue by taking down a sizeable decaying saguaro on the edge of the San Tan Trail.
- Park Staff and the San Tan Valley Master Gardeners continue to improve the Interpretive Trail and recently laid down seeds to create a pollinator garden.
- Maintenance Worker, Peter, scraped and leveled the Goldmine parking lot to repair ruts and holes caused by erosion and frequent vehicle use. At the main trailhead, he leveled the entryway to facilitate water dispersal during rainy weather.

- Maintenance and volunteers have closed off six spider trails and shortcuts.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

- The entry station is in full swing and staffed seven days a week with a park host.
- November's work projects completed: Rebuilt soil higher up around the horse entry gate base and covered entry area with pea gravel. Repaired eroded sections, removed protruding rocks, and pruned overhanging vegetation on the riparian stretch of Dragonfly Trail. Rebuilt rock steps over a fallen cottonwood tree on Dragonfly Trail.
- Removed large fallen boulders from the trail near Spur Cross/Dragonfly junction to allow staff ATV access for minor trail work and maintenance projects and park visitor bike access.
- The park continues to remain busy throughout the week and an increase in equestrian use has been noticed.
- Removed dry vegetation in the parking area, dug out drains, and removed loose rock from Spur Cross Trail (chain breaker hill section).
- Replaced broken wooden steps, installed drains, and removed loose rock on Elephant Mountain Trail (descent into Boca Grande Wash).
- Installed cable and directional signs across Boca Grande Wash below Elephant Mountain steps.

Usery Mountain Regional Park

- One Special Use Permit event took place during November, the *Trail Run and Mountain Bike* event with 385 people in attendance.
- On November 20, 2020, *Visit Mesa Organization*, did a video segment with Ranger Brennan to highlight the Usery Park Archery Range.
- On November 23, 2020, Arizona Game and Fish successfully transferred 109 Gila Topminnow to the pond, and they seem to be doing well with our viewing pond repairs completed.
- Usery park received several new park signs from MCDOT; maintenance staff completed replacing these throughout the park.
- Several campground sites still required decomposed granite (DG) around the picnic areas. This project was started in the fall of 2019 but could not be finished because of the size of the campground area and not enough DG. Maintenance staff worked to get DG delivered to the unfinished sites and all sites were finally completed in November 2020.
- Staff worked with the Volunteer Coordinator to schedule a volunteer trail work project. Volunteers closed off several unauthorized trails stemming off of our popular Blevins Trail.
- Usery Park held its first Volunteer 13K service project on Wednesday, December 16. Two County employees participated by assisting with a clean-up project at the park's Archery Range.
- Usery Park Archery Range will be undergoing a substantial service project throughout the next couple of months. Our first project took place in December; the Lower Practice Range was closed for four days while staff and park Hosts repaired, rebuilt, and replaced 12 target butts and removed and/or trimmed weeds and overgrowth of vegetation. Several Archery users have complimented the improvements.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park

- On November 17th, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office used White Tank Mountain Regional Park as a training site for helicopter operations with search and rescue coordinators and the local Rural Metro Fire Department.
- Park host and volunteer training was 100% completed this month!
- SWCA Environmental Consulting completed the Black Rock Area 4 Phase II Cultural Resource Survey.
- The Friends of White Tank Park ordered three brand new picnic tables for the Nature Center western patio. The park is grateful for this donation, totaling \$2,539, which will make the butterfly garden area more comfortable for park patrons to enjoy and more aesthetically pleasing!
- Friends of White Tank donated the supplies to make small "Ranger Program" signs to help point the public where a program is being held. Thank you to our park volunteer, Mike McCulley, for donating his time to build these very useful tools for the park.
- Park Ranger Justin offered a Night Hike on December 18th, which filled up quickly and was very popular! He believes that program quality has increased with the smaller group sizes (due to COVID-19 protocol) as he finds program attendees to be more engaged and asking more questions than in previous years.
- The Sonoran Audubon program, *Joe Ford's Birds of White Tank Mountains*, filled once again in December and continues to be a public favorite.

Maricopa County Parks Visitor Attendance Report
 FY21 through December 2020

FY21	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21			
FY20	Jul 19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20			
FY19	Jul 18	Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Jan 19	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 19	May 19	Jun 19			
Cave Creek	1,122	911	1,325	4,688	12,084	12,688							32,818	32,818	29.8%
	363	505	959	4,233	9,450	9,775	13,542	14,572	16,079	11,336	3,145	1552	25,285	85,511	-3.2%
	494	533	535	3,697	10,054	10,809	12,813	12,949	17,991	9,709	2,786	658	26,122	83,028	-1.0%
Estrella Park	2,571	3,317	4,696	8,333	12,723	9,639							41,279	41,279	40.9%
	1,350	1,954	3,571	6,034	9,547	6,841	12,726	11,067	16,449	9,370	5,819	3,687	29,297	88,415	2.4%
	1,824	1,378	3,202	5,458	10,190	6,547	11,754	8,365	15,356	9,840	6,242	3,070	28,599	83,226	-5.7%
McDowell Mtn	2,667	2,275	3,806	10,302	16,229	16,222							51,501	51,501	16.9%
	1,095	1,407	3,520	11,570	12,574	13,877	17,846	16,006	18,997	13,822	5,654	2,779	44,043	119,147	5.5%
	1,079	1,700	3,105	9,391	13,026	13,441	15,980	14,635	19,255	9,518	3,930	1,798	41,742	106,858	1.6%
San Tan Park	8,080	7,029	11,102	16,676	27,144	26,493							96,524	96,524	57.6%
	3,941	3,832	6,009	12,801	17,839	16,810	27,717	25,062	33,803	26,313	17,551	9,622	61,232	201,300	-2.9%
	3,518	3,786	5,515	12,393	18,642	18,718	26,054	18,736	27,959	15,598	12,225	6,364	62,572	169,508	-0.8%
Spur Cross	171	121	354	1984	3,826	13,348							19,804	19,804	217.2%
	113	122	244	730	826	4,208	4,592	4,569	4,508	2,276	563	210	6,243	22,961	-19.3%
	140	111	247	744	1,286	3,256	4,526	2,261	6,172	3,898	817	224	5,784	23,682	-25.3%
Usery Mtn Park	5,981	7,587	9,683	18,705	33,071	28,053							103,080	103,080	20.2%
	5,562	5,959	8,133	16,411	26,374	23,339	34,431	33,957	44,356	25,954	12,914	8,453	85,778	245,843	-3.2%
	5,519	5,775	7,668	15,711	28,914	27,958	32,925	28,352	41,655	20,986	15,124	7,443	91,545	238,030	3.4%
White Tank	8,801	7,667	11,991	20,736	31,836	31,371							112,402	112,402	13.0%
	4,913	5,658	9,810	20,115	31,195	27,762	39,931	40,494	64,224	27,038	16,680	10,640	99,453	298,460	10.1%
	5,666	6,052	8,617	26,767	31,806	30,598	40,333	38,731	58,215	26,260	18,311	7,201	109,506	298,557	21.2%
Hassayampa	855	632	840	1681	1,984	1,333							7,325	7,325	37.3%
	453	418	591	1405	1,498	971	1,746	2,002	2,321.0	2,477	2072	1294	5,336	17,248	10.1%
	366	367	649	997	1,317	1,151	1,535	1,223	2,847	1,743	1386	929	4,847	14,510	39.1%
Lake Pleasant	101,160	96,366	79,426	58,720	40,177	24,788							400,637	400,637	37.3%
	90,616	63,458	51,411	37,125	31,095	18,054	32,436	40,902	69,504	75,153	116,342	98,916	291,759	725,012	4.6%
	90,890	52,385	53,848	28,787	31,278	21,794	29,689	29,004	74,331	81,478	79,342	100,981	278,982	673,807	0.9%
DOC	0	-	0	-	0								0	0	-100.0%
	140	64	381	1,556	1887	1,330	1,622	1,630	1,030	-	-	-	5,358	9,640	14.1%
	27	120	384	1,305	1804	1,057	1,615	1,455	1,660	2,076	969		4,697	12,472	-14.8%
SYSTEM TOTAL	131,408	125,905	123,223	141,825	179,074	163,935	-	-	-	-	-	-	865,370	865,370	32.2%
	109,523	72,207	83,770	105,250	148,317	135,329	177,224	155,711	265,441	181,106	141,132	128,668	654,396	1,703,678	3.4%
	97,539	70,625	87,713	103,371	141,070	132,622	177,383	168,039	228,472	162,507	126,607	114,212	632,940	1,610,160	9.6%