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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 1, 2006
To: Parks and Recreation Department Commissioners
From: William C. Scalzo, Director *WCS*
Re: **Director's Summary of Current Events**

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

Director's Report

Rich Glinski submitted an entry for a nomination in the category of "Natural Resources Award" and Rand Hubbell submitted for "Outstanding Sports Program Award". On August 31, at the APRA Awards Banquet, we were presented our 2006 Awards in these categories.

Superintendent Report

McDowell Mountain Regional Park: The extension of the Dixie Mine trail to the Pemberton and the creation of a yet to be named trail connecting the Dixie Mine Trail to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve was completed and opened for use in early August. The Eastside Trails Crew did an outstanding job laying out these new trails and using the dozer, owned by the department, to cut this trail and virtually eliminated the need for water bars. A grand opening will be scheduled for later in the fall when the hiking and biking season gets into full swing. The trail was completed per an agreement with the preserve ahead of schedule. The preserve has encountered delays in being able to purchase the land needed for the trailhead at the western end of the connector, Windgate Trail on the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. The trail to Dixie Mine from the southern boundary of the park has reopened after being closed for nearly five weeks due to the extreme fire danger.

Hydro seeding was done on the disturbed desert along the park and Rio Verde joint fence line and the remaining areas around the power poles within the park and stretching to the southern boundary were completed at the end of August.

The donation of a Kawasaki Mule to the Park by the McDowell Park Association has been received, processed through Equipment Services and is now available for daily use at the Park.

Usery Mountain Regional Park: Interpretive Ranger, Amy Roberts, thundered along with the monsoons storms by creatively programming in August with wildlife safari hikes, monsoon hikes, sunrise fitness hikes, senior fitness, brisk walking on the Merkle Trail, Funky Hat hikes, digital camera how-to's, and desert basics walks.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park: Pinal County installed "No Parking" signs along both sides of Phillips Road for ¼ mile leading into San Tan Regional Park. They also installed road closure signs for the intersection of Donneloy Road and Brenner Pass.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park: Experienced a microburst in the recent storms causing numerous trees to go down. We currently have county adjusters reviewing and assessing the damage that was done.

Maricopa Trail

Dave Wilson/EPG has received the notice to proceed on Segment 10, Cave Creek and Spur Cross trails design; advertised a request for qualifications for construction services to assist in the cost estimating and construction of the 3 segments commencing October 1st.

Participated at the Andy Piper/DMP Broadstone Ranch Planning & Zoning Commission hearing to comment on the regional trail provision stipulations.

Coordinated with Ray Brown/City of Phoenix Planning Department on their review on Segment 14 right-of-way application for their response to the Arizona State Land Department.

Completed the review/selection of 10 sites for the proposed Visitor Centers and Amphitheatres with TRK architects; the architectural program space requirements document is complete and approved.

Provided Tom Farnsworth/Survey Supervisor City of Phoenix with information on the Maricopa Trail alignment in their Sonoran Preserve area west of I-17.

Jim Gross/ASLD gave direction to proceed with the archeological surveys for Segment 14 of the Maricopa Trail.

Darren Gerard/Planning and Development has given Pulte/Anthem direction on how to proceed with their application to complete the Maricopa Trail and stipulated trailhead.

Provided Shane Leonard/Roosevelt Water Conservation District with the regional trail system Master Plan for their legal review.

Michael Baker/Volunteers for Arizona is reviewing the Western Canal Trail alignment to determine what they may do to assist the construction of a trail node in Tempe.

ADOT has presented their preferred alignment of the proposed 202 west of South Mountain Park on 54th Avenue allowing for an underpass of the Maricopa Trail.

Participated with Dan Davis/City of Avondale on the potential location of the Sun Circle Trail.

Provided Vince Murray and Arizona State Parks with coordinating Maricopa Trail information for their Anza Trail project.

Marketing Update

Valley Forward Association – Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department recently received notice that our Environmental Technologies (Maricopa County installs energy efficient thermal solar system at Desert Outdoor Center) entry was selected as a finalist for the Crescordia Award. The award winner will be announced at the 26th Annual Environmental Excellence Awards Banquet on Friday, October 13th.

Contract Updates

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: The deadline for public comments to the draft Environmental Assessment ended August 18, 2006. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) will now review and make a determination as to whether an Environmental Impact Statement is needed. If it is required, construction delays will occur. Maricopa County and the City of Peoria are finalizing an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that outlines responsibilities in regards to planning and zoning; public safety and emergency response; and general provisions, e.g. term. The goal is to have the finalized agreement

approved by the City of Peoria and then the Board of Supervisors. Completion of the IGA was a critical step in the review and permitting process which is on-going.

A draft agreement has been provided to BOR for review and discussion for Parks obtaining approximately 119 acres of additional land into Lake Pleasant Regional Park. A portion of the acquired land will be used for entering into a Third-Party Agreement for construction, operation, management and maintenance of a convenience and recreation supply store for park users.

Adobe Dam Regional Park: The deadline for submission of bids for the appraisal of equipment at Waterworld Safari is September 12, 2006. No bids have been received to date. Upon completion of the appraisal, the Request for Proposal will be prepared and release for selection of a concessionaire to be effective October 1, 2008.

The Request for Proposal for new concessionaires on vacant lands at Adobe Dam Regional Park was released August 17, 2006. A mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for September 14, 2006 with Proposals due October 19, 2006.

A meeting of all current concessionaires at Adobe Dam Regional Park was held August 7th. It was very successful and provided the opportunity to discuss recent and upcoming changes to the Park.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) formally rejected our proposal for a horseback riding concession due to their interpretation of funding sources, e.g. a non-Parks entity and the fact that profits will be taken by the Concessionaire, an appeal is being considered. A meeting with BLM to discuss this decision as well as other BLM and Parks related actions was scheduled for August 29th and is now being rescheduled by BLM for a later date.

Discussions related to expansion of the existing golf course in coordination with private development are continuing. Discussion will ultimately involve BLM.

Sprint is currently conducting on-site surveys of the proposed cell-tower site at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. If the site is satisfactory, a formal Use Management Agreement will be negotiated.

Construction/Design Projects

FY06 Projects:

Estrella Mountain Regional Park Irrigation System Improvements: The construction contract was awarded to Grounds Control, Inc. and they have started work but are facing delays with materials. The estimated completion date is December, 2006.

Entry Station Improvements 2006 – Phase II: The construction contract was awarded to Niche Contractors, Inc. and they will begin work in August starting with the monument signs.

Usery Mountain Regional Park Water System Improvements: The project was bid on August 10th and we are proceeding with Pierson Construction Corporation. It is estimated the notice to proceed will be issued on September 11, 2006.

FY07 Projects:

Visitor Centers and Amphitheaters: The spatial program for the visitor centers and amphitheaters has been finalized. If the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors allows more funds for the structures, it is estimated that the new visitor center will be 3,500 to 4,000 square feet.

System Wide Master Plan: A pre-submittal meeting was conducted on August 23rd in which consultants were invited to attend and ask questions about the project. The project is estimated to start in mid November and last 10 months.

Estrella Campground Design Update: Negotiations are complete with Stantec and the contract was processed in August. Construction is anticipated next fiscal year if funds are approved.

Playground Shade Structures: Negotiations are proceeding with Shade 'N Net through a Mohave Educational Services Cooperative contract. Seventeen playgrounds throughout the park system are planned for shade structures. Shade 'N Net conducted site visits in August and provided a quote.

Restroom Improvements – Phase 3: Negotiations are complete with ART and the contract was processed in August. A scoping meeting was conducted by the architect for the purpose of obtaining the field staff's suggestions for improvements. McDowell will receive two new family campground restrooms and Utery will receive two new group campground restrooms. All four existing structures will be demolished and built new.

Vulture Mountain: Discussions are proceeding with the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Parks has allocated \$100,000 to assist BLM with environmental studies.

Coming and Going in Human Resources

We are currently still recruiting for the following positions: Contact Station Assistant (temporary) at Lake Pleasant, Park Maintenance Worker (Lake Pleasant), Park Maintenance Worker (DOC), Park Maintenance Worker (San Tan), Park Supervisor (Cave Creek), Trades Specialist (Trails/Construction Crew).

Interviews are being conducted on August 30 and September 1, 2006 for Interpretive Ranger at the DOC. Cert lists have been distributed and we are currently waiting for interview dates for the Park Maintenance Worker at Utery, Trails Technician for the Trails Crew, and Accountant at Headquarters.

We are continuing to recruit for Park Supervisors at Estrella and San Tan. Interviews for Park Supervisor at Cave Creek will be held soon.