



234 N. Central Avenue
Suite 6400
Phoenix, AZ 85004-2187
Phone: 602-506-2930
Fax: 602-506-4692
www.maricopa.gov/parks

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 29, 2007
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 February Director's Summary.

Director Report

Former Parks' Commissioner Peter Hasslacher passed away on March 4th. Mr. Hasslacher was Chairman of the Commission in 1992 during my first year as director. He was a commissioner from 1988 to 1994. A memorial service will be held later, and I will make all aware of the date.

I recently attended the Revenue School in West Virginia where I am a regent and teach several courses to professionals in the Parks and Recreation field. We now have a number of our current staff as graduates of the program with Don Harris graduating this year. I strongly recommend we continue to send any new supervisors to this school which is sponsored by NRPA.

Superintendent Report

Desert Outdoor Center: DOC staff met with representatives of Tempe Parks and Recreation Department (TPRD) to review joint programming opportunities for events that currently are held at Tempe Town Lake. TPRD is interested in weekend educational opportunities for classes in sailing and rowing. Students would be a range of ages, and weekend classes would involve overnight stays at the DOC.

Summer Aquatics Education Camp is ramping up with many calls for information on registration. Endeavors to increase marketing effort over that of last year seem to be working. We have worked closely with our PIO to get information in the news media, improve content of both County and Boy Scout web sites, and attend / teach summer recreational fairs.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: Natural Resources Program - The program policy and procedures outline and forms were submitted. The program remains on hold pending final review and approval from Risk Management and Headquarters.

Peoria IGA Draft - The Park Supervisor is currently reviewing comments submitted for Aquatics/Program Intergovernmental Agreement. When the document is complete it will be submitted for approval.

New Floating Restroom Facility - Lake Pleasant currently has one floating restroom facility and is in need of an additional facility. The Park Supervisor and Maintenance Supervisor have researched and submitted the required documentation for purchasing the facility. Game and Fish has agreed to purchase and install the facility if Parks will accept the responsibility of maintaining the facility. A cooperative agreement to accept the facility will need to be presented to the Board of Supervisors for

approval. If approved, the facility will be installed at Honeymoon Cove for the public to access as well as Desert Outdoor Center groups attending aquatics programs.

Staff and Public education – Brochures and News Releases have been issued by the Parks Department to inform boaters of the effect Quagga Mussel have on our waterways. Park staff has been educated in the necessary steps to take to ensure boaters do not launch with these species attached to their equipment. The Navigational Aid Crew has also been instructed to report any incidents of on-water structures or aids being invaded by this species.

Events at the Lake:

- The Nest Watchers have reported one successful nestling. During the banding process on March 20th, it was measured, examined and the sex was determined to be male. This will give a general indication of the nestlings' health. The estimated time for the nesting to fledge is the beginning of May at 12 weeks of age, although some have fledged as early as 10 weeks. It is a concern that the nestling will try to fledge sooner due to the extreme heat, so keep your fingers crossed that either the weather cools down or that the mother continues to provide enough shade for the nestling.
- Public Educations - Bradshaw Coalition - The Bradshaw Coalition conducted a welcome weekend on February 10th. They continue to educate OHV riders of the legal areas to ride and to ride responsibly. Boundary signage has been installed, as well as fee required signs.
- April 1st - Dam Good Run/Walk/Hike - Posters were distributed to each park for display. The event logo appears on the splash page of the park's web calendar and will direct participants to the actual event page where they may print a registration form. Event flyers are posted in the park kiosks, at each entry station, the Operations Center, and the Visitor Center. Hard copies of the registration form are available at the entry stations, OC and VC. Additional flyers will be distributed in local stores, athletic stores (e.g., New Balance, Runner's Den), and libraries within the community. Both Liberty Wildlife and Arizona Game and Fish will provide wildlife displays for participants to enjoy following the race.
- May 19th the Annual Boating Safety Celebration - Park staff, AZ. Game and Fish, Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Power Squadron are in the process of coordinating the Annual Boating Safety Celebration. Boat inspections and safety information will be held and distributed throughout the park.

West Valley Recreation Passport Program - Eight LP programs and events appear on the committee's web calendar as passport events: two programs each for February and March, Dam Good Run and Easter Egg Hunt for April, the Boating Safety Celebration for May, and the Fireworks Celebration for July. This fulfills the goal of spotlighting at least one LP program or event per month as a passport event. Events and programs for the second half of the year will be added when they are available. Lake Pleasant purchased a unique stamp (lizard) that the main contact station will use to mark the card of each guest who arrives at the park to attend a passport program or event.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park: The White Tank Entry Station is complete and operational. The septic tank is in and the ET bed is nearly complete. The New Restroom at Area #7 is virtually complete and ready for public use. Many people have given compliments on the new restrooms at areas 4 and 6.

Attendance is up 23% with many people enjoying the camping and hiking in the park. Several camping sites in the Family Campground have been expanded and groomed to accommodate modern tents, many of which are larger. The camping season is going strong.

The White Tank Park interpretive programming is going strong with 39 public programs for March and April combined. The public benefits from several outreach programs, private group programs and multiple daily "mini" programs in the Visitor Center.

Several fence repairs by park staff members have been made on the 7 mile long fence on the east boundary and the 9 mile long fence on the north boundary. These repairs and assistance from the Sheriff's Trails Officers have helped stop problems in those areas.

White Tank received little rain this winter. In late February we received $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of rain, which was enough to fill the tanks throughout the range. The mule deer disappeared out of the low country to take advantage of the water and browse in the upper range.

Wild flowers are light this year; however the trees have had a good year with many showing growth and should bloom well. Road side bushes took full advantage of the light winter rains. Staff has been trimming trees and bushes along 7 miles of roadway (or 14 miles of trimming if you count both sides).

Park staff has been placing trail side mile markers along the trails to assist hikers with map location issues and to gage the distance of their hikes. Mile markers also assist rescue workers. With over 20 miles of trails in the park the project will take some time, but will be a valuable tool for staff and visitors.

Park Supervisor Don Harris completed year 2 and graduated from Oglebay Revenue Development and Management School in West Virginia. Minimal cost to the department was incurred, as Don was awarded a scholarship for both years of the training. He brings back valuable information from the Regents, classes and perspectives from Parks and Recreation Professionals from all over the country.

Buckeye Hills Regional Park: Parks and Sheriff's Office Shooting Ranges for phase one of grading and earthwork went in front of the Board of Supervisors on March 21, 2007 and passed unanimously. Second phase for facilities will go before the Board at a later date.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park: Paul "Crash" Marusich has been chosen as the Park Supervisor. He will bring years of experience on special events and programming to the park. We look forward to the future endeavors at the park.

It is the busy season for the park and Estrella Mountain Regional Park has hosted a variety of events during the past two months.

- The Goodyear Rodeo was held February 15th-16th. It was well attended everyday by the public and had many top competitors making an appearance.
- The turf area of the park was the site for Camp Digalus February 23rd -25th. This event brought out hundreds of scouts to camp and learn new skills.
- February 24th was the well attended MBAA Mountain Bike Race on the Competitive Track.
- March 3rd, was the first time Estrella Mountain Regional Park was used as site for the St. Joseph the Worker Hike for the Homeless. A few hundred people participated and raised \$40,000.00 for the charity. The hike also attracted radio station 98.7 the Peak and they did a live radio remote from the event. The department donated two annual passes as prizes for the hikers.
- On March 11th, the park was honored to have a program conducted by the Buffalo Soldiers Living History Group. The program was conducted in the Rodeo Arena and helped the public better understand the life of an African-American Cavalry Trooper.
- On March 17th and 18th the park partnered with the Citizen's for Estrella Mountain Park and had a booth at the Tres Rios Nature Festival. The booth provided outstanding public outreach along with a chance to meet with other conservation agencies.

As always, Ranger Patricia Armstrong provides many programs to the public. She leads many hikes herself and also brings in experts to broaden the diversity of offerings at the park. Park projects are going well. The park hosts have finished a remodel of the park office. A walkthrough of the park's new Contact Station is scheduled for March 26 and that building should be ready for use in the near future.

Vulture Mountain: Work continues on the Management Use Agreement with Bureau of Land Management.

Usery: Usery Mountain Regional Park experienced a strong winter season despite the cooler temperatures. With fuel prices being lower this year the camping in February and March of 2007 was significantly more consistent over 2006 with a full campground and using overflow for eight weeks.

The wildlife viewing area is almost complete with a re-circulating pond that has a small waterfall-type feature. Aquatic plants will be planted in a few weeks to provided shade for the desert pupfish and Gila topminnow that will reside in the pond. Wildlife viewing blinds and benches will be the next step as will be the kiosks. Coyotes have been seen at the watering hole already along with deer and javelina tracks.

Usery Park has a new interpretive ranger, Jenny Work. She joins us from Florida with a degree in Marine Affairs and with much interpretive and naturalist experience from Miami-Dade Parks Department and the National Park Service.

She is a relative newcomer to the Sonoran Desert living in Phoenix only a year. The User team is very excited to have her on board.

The park hosts and park supervisor conducted 42 interpretive programs in February and March. The surprise hit of each month was the "Toddler Cruise" where an enthusiastic group of kids ranging in age from 2.5 months up to 10 years old with their parents, plus some grandparents cruised around the Merkle Trail. The cruisers howled like coyotes, crawled like bobcats and learned what to do upon hearing a rattlesnake rattle. After February's Toddler Cruise the park received phone calls for more hikes and media called to schedule more so we did.

McDowell: Rand Hubbell flew to Sacramento, CA to attend a reception, at which McDowell Mountain Regional Park and the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department received an award for outstanding leadership in developing "Mountain Bike by the Moonlight." The award was given to the park and department by the Pacific Southwest Regional Council of the National Recreation and Park Association. This is a follow-up, to the award won by the park for the same program from the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association

Events that were held at McDowell:

- The Park hosted the Pemberton 50K and record holder Paul Dewitt took more than 8 minutes off his record. More than 125 racers competed in the 2007 race.
- Team RPM a group of road cyclists held the McDowell Mountain Park Criterium in the north area of the park. This heat race attracted over 300 competitors.
- On February 25th the 7th Annual Desert Classic Duathlon took place, with a 3-mile run, a 21-mile cycling portion and concluded with a 3.5 mile run. This year over 300 individuals and team members competed in this race which qualified the top three in each category for the USAT Southwest Regional Duathlon Championship and ITU Short Course World championships in Hungary.
- On February 28th McDowell hosted the Annual Host Appreciation luncheon. The luncheon was very much appreciated and many comments were made after the lunch thanking the department and staff.
- March 24th, the park hosted the first annual Joanne Wood Walk for Breast Cancer research and awareness. The park provided assistance in setting up aid stations and getting all the volunteers into position.

Desert Dogs Youth Mountain Biking team came out and worked on two areas on the Pemberton Trail where erosion had occurred on the trail. Park maintenance staff had stock piled dirt and the Park Supervisor worked with the volunteers to repair the damage and build berms to stop future erosion.

McDowell maintenance staff completed the electrical conversion of the new restroom in the North Loop so that the interior lights are turned on by motion detector and the exterior lights are triggered by photocell.

New construction is underway to replace the second restroom in the North Loop of the Family Campground and add a restroom to the Competitive Track parking lot. Both are expected to be complete in late April to early May.

Game and Fish drained the Pemberton Pond and will schedule a presentation to the Superintendents and select Park Supervisors to discuss a Safe Harbor agreement allowing native fish to be introduced to water features in County Parks.

Rand Hubbell, Park Supervisor has become an ex-officio member of the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce Board of Director's. This position will be non-voting, but will continue on the board without term limits or elections and will only be replaced by those who follow in these selected positions.

Spur Cross: Staff continues to coordinate at the park level, a cooperative grant for the Spur Cross solar wildlife oasis with members of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Pond Gnome.

Regional Trail contractor, Dennis Smith, has largely completed his work on the SCRCA. Park staff is impressed with the quality and quantity of his work.

John Gunn has teamed up with Dr. Ed Northam, of University of Arizona Ag Extension Services, to research and evaluate the effects of Roundup at various concentrations on the Star Thistle at various life stages. Kathy Goodhart

continues to make significant progress in treating a significant noxious weed infestation (Star Thistle) that is occurring on the Conservation Area.

18 interpretive programs were offered during the month of February, 20 programs were offered in March. A presentation was also made to the Sierra Club on desert fire ecology.

San Tan: With the arrival of the new park supervisor, David Jordan, San Tan is experiencing some new programs and events.

- March 3rd – “Stargazing for everyone” drew a crowd of 47 eager visitors.
- March 17th – “Green Petrochauns Hike” attracted 28 visitors. We hiked along the Goldmine Trail discussing the history and significance of petroglyphs. After the hike, the visitors participated in an interactive activity to make their very own petroglyph.
- March 28th – “Sonoran Desert 101” hike will be lead by visiting Interpretative Park Ranger, Doc. The hike will discuss the structure and wildlife of the Sonoran Desert.
- March 31st – We are going to hold a Sunrise hike to introduce the new park supervisor to the visitors and members within the community. Later that evening, we will also hold a Full Moon hike to show visitors the nightlife in the desert.

The park successfully opened three new trails to the public (San Tan, Moonlight and Goldmine). The trails dedication ceremony will take place on April 24th. The recent publication of the trails has helped increase awareness of the park within the community and attracted new business.

Cave Creek: Interviews were successful for the Office Assistant and Park Supervisor. The new Office Assistant, James Terrell started at the Park on March 26th. Park Supervisor, Raymond Kanuit will begin his career with the department on April 9th. Both will have some time to work with Mark Lansing before his retirement on April 20th.

Several hundred bicyclists rode through the park for an American Diabetes Association fund raiser.

The Cave Creek Park campgrounds have been full for the past few months and have had campers in overflow.

The Go-John trail looks great after recent work by the trail contractor and trails crew. This work has significantly improved the trail on both sides of the mountain. The department has received many compliments on the new trail. Author Christine Maxa took advantage of the new trail with a book signing and then led a wildflower hike on the trail.

Contract Updates

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: The decision on the “Finding of No Significant Impact” (FONSI) was reached by BOR; hence the permitting has begun. If all goes as planned, tentative opening of Scorpion Bay Marina and Yacht Club will be around January 1, 2008.

A Memorandum of Understanding was approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 21, 2007 for Conservation of the Bald Eagle in Arizona. Other signatories included Arizona Game and Fish, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Public Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Air Force – Luke AFB, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others.

An amended agreement with the Central Arizona Water Conservation District was presented and approved by the Board of Supervisors for approval on March 21st. The amended subcontract provides for permanent service of Colorado River water with an initial delivery term of 100 years. All costs associated with M&I water service will be reimbursed by contract concessionaires. There is no additional financial impact to the Department.

Adobe Dam Regional Park: Final negotiations have occurred between Parks and Adobe Dam Paintball Park. The proposed Use Management Agreement will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for recommended approval during April 2007.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) pertaining to the Aquatic Park (e.g. Waterworld Safari) was released on March 29. The Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for April 24th with Proposals due November 29, 2007. The new Use Management Agreement will become effective October 1, 2008.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park: Options are being reviewed pertaining to the improvement of the existing golf course, e.g. Estrella Mountain Golf Course, and development of a second 18-hole course.

Usery Mountain Regional Park: The Use Management Agreement is being negotiated between the County and Verizon for a cell tower site at Usery Mountain Regional Park.

Amendment One to the Agreement with Arizona Model Aviators is being negotiated.

Grant Updates

Parks has submitted an application for Heritage funds to State Parks on behalf of the Arizona Zoological Society a.k.a. The Phoenix Zoo for \$116,000 through a Memorandum of Understanding. The outdoor park development consists of water play equipment, walkways and paths, lamp posts, park benches and playground equipment with shade canopies. This partnership has opened new opportunities that will benefit both the Zoo and Parks. The Educational Staff at the Zoo has been teaming with our Desert Outdoor Center Interpretive Rangers to create combined educational programs that will result in promoting and enhancing programs we currently offer in addition to new programs.

Marketing Updates

Grants - Arizona Office of Tourism Teamwork for Effective Marketing (TEAM) – Parks is in the process of applying for the TEAM grant. One of the major marketing efforts that is being pitched in the grant is system brochure distribution through the Certified Folder Display Service, Inc. Parks is currently looking at two different types of programs:

- **Visitor Marketing Program** - This rack brochure distribution program is designed to penetrate the growing visitor market. Rack brochures are displayed at high traffic visitor-oriented locations including hotels, motels, restaurants, car rental offices, visitor centers, airports, and chambers of commerce. Whether you need to reach travelers in a particular city, throughout an entire state or region, this program allows you to target and saturate a specific market with your brochure message!
- **Corporate Industrial Program** - This effective rack brochure distribution program is designed to reach employed adults. Rack brochure distribution service provides an opportunity for repetitive advertising to thousands of employees at some of America's best known companies such as Compaq, Motorola, Honeywell, Apple and Boeing. Brochure display racks are located in employee cafeterias and recreation areas to assure ongoing and continuous exposure for our clients' brochures.

Events -

Parks is currently making arrangements to host the following events:

- Tuesday, April 10th – White Tank Mountain Regional Park Entry Station Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.
- Saturday, April 21st – Adobe Dam Regional Park Earth Day Clean-Up Effort with Keep Phoenix Beautiful.
- Monday, April 23rd – Estrella Mountain Regional Park Contact Station Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.
- Tuesday, April 24th – San Tan Mountain Regional Park Trail System Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.
- Thursday, April 26th – Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area Trail System Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Parks will have a booth at the following events:

- March 31st and April 1st – Arizona Game and Fish Department's Outdoor Expo at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility. AZ Game and Fish expects over 10,000 individuals to attend the event.
- April 25th – National County Government Week event at 201 W. Jefferson St.

Publicity

Reports - A new section has been added to the monthly **In the News** report (print media stories). At the back of the report you'll notice a section labeled **Bacon's | Multivision Inc. Media Report**. This section contains the number of

times Parks appeared in a story which aired on television. The estimated audience size and publicity value has been left in for informational purposes only. Please note that there are a number of typos in the reports as they are transferred exactly as they are received.

Master Plan Marketing - Parks is working with Pros Consulting to get the word out about the public forums currently taking place around the Valley. Parks has provided artwork for posters, postcards, flyers and signage.

Brochures - The new Cave Creek Regional Park brochures are available for distribution. The Usery Mountain Regional Park brochures have been mocked up and are currently being reviewed.

In addition to issuing several press releases in March, Parks advertised upcoming events in Arizona Parenting Magazine, the City of Peoria's quarterly publication, and was lucky enough conduct interviews on KFYI, KTAR, KMVP (AM stations) and The Peak (FM station).

Coming and Going in Human Resources

The following people have been hired at Parks: David Jordan, Park Supervisor at San Tan; Jennifer Work, Interpretive Ranger at Usery; Charlene Valentine, Temporary Contact Station Assistant at White Tanks; David McCaig, Temporary Trails Technician with Trails Crew; James Terrell, Park Office Assistant at Cave Creek; Raymond Kaniut, Park Supervisor at Cave Creek; Paul (Crash) Marusich promoted to Park Supervisor at Estrella

The following people recently left Parks or are leaving Parks: Glenn Hudson, Laurene Muro, Ted Hale and Mark Lansing (Retiring on 4/20/07).

We are currently recruiting for the following positions: Interpretive Ranger at McDowell; Interpretive Ranger at Cave Creek; and Park Maintenance Worker at the Desert Outdoor Center. Interviews were held for Trades Specialist – Electrician and Park Maintenance Worker at Usery, we are currently waiting for a decision. Interviews are being held currently for Accountant/Procurement Specialist.