

ANNUAL REPORT

FY23

JULY 2022

JUNE 2023

SUPER BLOOM EDITION

PICACHO PEAK STATE PARK



ARIZONA
STATE PARKS & TRAILS

CONTENTS

Director's Message	3
People in the Parks!	4
Focusing on People	5
Agency Updates	6
Grants Update	10
Visitation	15
Celebrate Visitors	16
Financial Updates	18
Happy Campers!	22
Community Engagement	23





BOB BROSCHIED
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The last fiscal year was one of overall change for the state. In January 2023, we welcomed Governor Katie Hobbs to her first term in Arizona. An incoming governor can elect to make a lot of changes at the beginning, but I'm happy that Governor Hobbs decided to retain me as executive director of Arizona State Parks and Trails. She and her office have also shown overwhelming support for the agency and our direction. Our fiscal year 2023 spanned both outgoing Governor Ducey and incoming Governor Hobbs, but we remained steady on our path toward becoming the leader, nationwide, in outdoor recreation.

The start of 2023 was busy for visitors, with Arizona hosting the Super Bowl, which impacted tourism to the state. Our agency worked to promote the parks as places to visit before or after the game, and more than 6,500 Super Bowl fans visited our website due to our campaign. Next, Cactus League baseball fans headed to Arizona – more than 1.6 million people. During that season, our parks exploded with wildflower colors. Several of our parks – Picacho Peak State Park chief among them – saw a huge influx of visitors hoping to enjoy the bright blankets of flowers. Arizona's state parks are some of the best places to experience a superbloom, and our March visitation numbers reflect that.

Overall, visitation remained strong but showed a 3.2% drop. The more than 3 million people who came to our parks and natural areas continue to rank their experiences as incredible, and our customer satisfaction score was 94% average for the year.

In FY23, we also finalized our Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This plan serves as a guide to outdoor recreation priorities and grant funding opportunities, and our efforts to be more inclusive were rewarded with resounding feedback from nearly 7,000 stakeholders. The SCORP addresses how we, as a state, can protect and enhance the outdoor recreation assets that sustain our health, economy, and livelihoods and support opportunities for residents and visitors. The SCORP is important to the future of outdoor recreation and helps us, and our partners, work strategically toward meeting needs and goals identified by our stakeholders. This year's robust plan will guide us for the next five years as we implement the priorities identified this year.

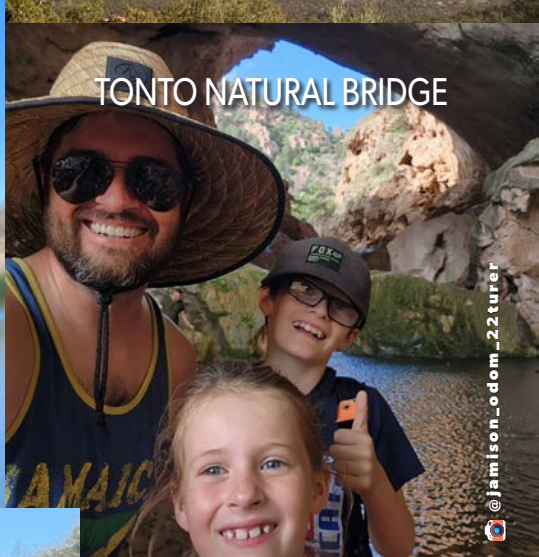
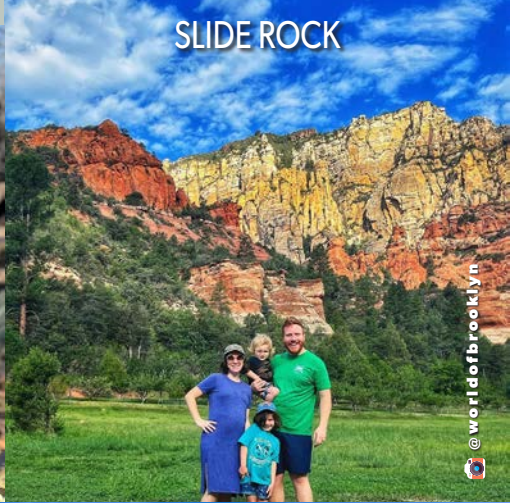
Over the past four years of being director, the agency has focused on building a strong, dynamic team with open communication, collaboration, and teamwork. With parks spread across the state and the majority of our workforce located in these parks, it can be difficult to remain connected and cohesive. Our strategic objectives focus partly on strengthening our team, and many of this year's successes show that we are reaching that goal.

Continuing to strengthen our partnerships, our people, and our parks is just one way that we grow as an agency and remain committed to our mission. Preserving and protecting the unique, special outdoor spaces for people now and in the future is a never-ending job, and every day we can see the value and reward of that work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Broscheid".



PEOPLE IN THE PARKS!



FOCUSING ON PEOPLE



Arizona State Parks and Trails follows a five-year strategy focusing on parks, partnerships, people and pocketbook. Each of these areas allows the agency to grow without losing focus of the mission and vision.

The Importance of People

Arizona State Parks and Trails manages and conserves the natural and cultural resources in Arizona for the people, both now and in the future. The agency's strategic focus on people includes not only visitors and supporters of the parks and natural areas, but also the people working in the parks – the team.

A strategic goal was started in 2020 to create an environment to cultivate a high performing and engaged workforce. A strong, connected workforce means better service for customers as well as engagement with the mission and employee retention. Building a culture is not something that can happen overnight, but results from FY23 show incredible gains.

Continuance of executive director

In December 2022, the agency received word that Executive Director Bob Broscheid would be retained in his role by incoming Governor Katie Hobbs. This showed confidence in the direction and leadership at the agency and helped maintain momentum.

New deputy director

Sarah Rose Webber, the former chief operating officer for Governor Ducey, joined the team as deputy director in November 2022. Sarah's leadership, composure, and passion for outdoor recreation helped further agency goals and directives.

Launched emerging leader program

In November 2022, the agency launched the first annual emerging leader program. This development program began with a three-day workshop followed by two online sessions and a final in-person session and graduation. Only 25 candidates from the agency were selected for the nationally-accredited leadership development program that was customized for Arizona State Parks and Trails. Participants gained insight into their personal style, capabilities, strengths and areas for growth. Emphasis was placed on developing leaders and understanding team dynamics within the unique setting of outdoor recreation and conservation. This program combined world-class faculty with personal assessments, leadership exercises, analytical assignments and challenging activities to provide a life-changing experience to emerging leaders within the context of the agency.

Employee engagement scores

Arizona State Parks and Trails, as part of an overall effort for all agencies within the State of Arizona, participated in an annual employee engagement survey. This year, the overall agency engagement score increased from 71% to 77%, which was also the statewide result for engagement. That six-point increase demonstrates the results of efforts to provide solutions and opportunities within the agency and shows a significant rise since a 66% score in 2019. Increases in these scores show that the agency is invested in its workforce and continues to make improvements based on the feedback it receives. There was also improvement in every question category, specifically for:

- *Overall I'm satisfied with my job* increased from 73% to 84%
- *My job is important to support the mission of my agency* increased from 87% to 92%
- *I received recognition for my work when I deserve it* increased from 61% to 70%.
- *I would recommend my agency to other people as a great place to work* improved from 57% to 73%.



Agency UPDATES

SUNSET AUDIT

In FY23, Arizona State Parks and Trails underwent a sunset audit. This process requires the Arizona legislature to review the purpose and functions of state agencies to determine whether continuation, revision, consolidation or termination is warranted. Reviews are conducted by the Office of the Auditor General or a committee of reference (COR). A public hearing is held by the COR to discuss the review and receive testimony from state agency officials and the public.

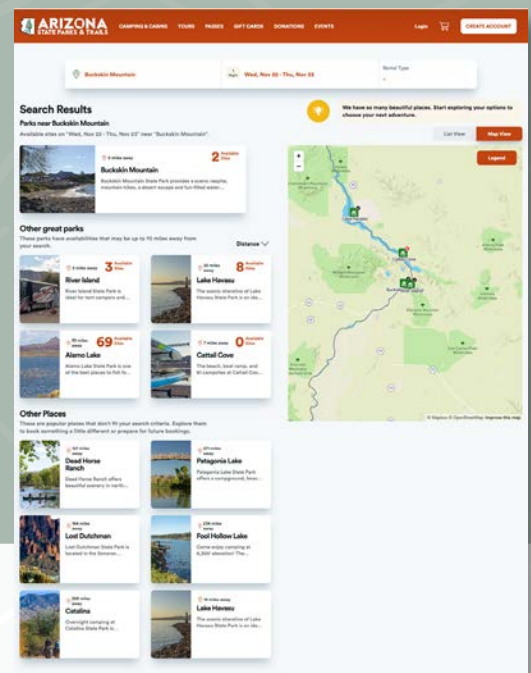
The Senate Natural Resources, Energy & Water Committee of Reference and the House Land, Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee of Reference jointly recommended that Arizona State Parks and Trails be continued for eight years until July 1, 2031. This audit is the highest level of accountability for an agency, and being approved for the full eight years showcases trust and accountability.

The Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission (AORCC) also received a continuance for eight years. AORCC is an advisory board to Arizona State Parks and Trails and reviews statewide outdoor recreation and lake improvement plans and reviews applications for eligible projects to receive Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF) and Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund grants.

INTEGRATED PARKS SYSTEM

A new Integrated system for State Parks reservations, website and customer service call center went live in July 2022. The system provides enhanced reservations functionality, improved reporting and financial tracking and a system structure that can grow with the agency as visitation continues to increase and demand for campsites, cabins and tours grows.

During the first two days of the system being live, Arizona State Parks and Trails **generated \$450,000 in camping reservation fees**. Over the next week, an **additional \$668,000 was earned, totaling \$1.1 MILLION** in revenue after just the first several days.



SCORP

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Finalized

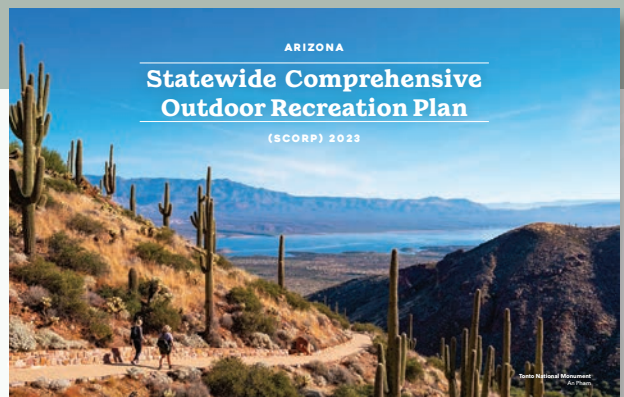
Arizona State Parks and Trails completed the **2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)**, a requirement for the state to continue eligibility for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) dollars. Every five years, Arizona State Parks and Trails leads the development of the SCORP, with collaboration from federal, state, local and private partners. This plan addresses how Arizona, as a state, across boundaries and jurisdictions, can protect and enhance the outdoor recreation assets that help to sustain the health, economy, and opportunities for residents and visitors in outdoor recreation. It also outlines a strategy to ensure our outdoor recreation experiences remain resilient amid environmental pressures and growing use and demand.

In FY23, the agency, working in collaboration with Arizona State University and Partners in Brainstorms, gathered information from over 6,500 Arizona residents for this demographically-representative study. A total of 5,444 surveys and interviews in Spanish and English were completed online, by phone, and on mobile devices. An additional 1,324 online surveys were completed by invested outdoor recreationists through Arizona State Parks and Trails and other partners' communication channels. A total of 112 surveys were completed by agencies and organizations involved in providing outdoor recreation, including representatives from federal, state, county, town/city, tribal, and non-government organizations.

From this, four priority areas were identified for the next five years:

- Conservation and Environmental Stewardship
- Sustainable Outdoor Recreation
- Connection, Community and Economic Vitality
- Pathways to Health and Wellness

These priorities reflect the current trends, opportunities, and challenges facing Arizona's outdoor recreation resources today. Each priority includes a primary goal, followed by specific objectives and actionable strategies. The interconnected priorities are critical components to achieving a future vision where Arizona's outdoors continues to provide rich recreation experiences while conserving natural and cultural resources. The full SCORP can be viewed online at AZStateParks.com/Publications.



SUPER WILDFLOWER SEASON

at Picacho Peak



Due to a series of winter storms in November-February, the wildflower season in southern Arizona was a superbloom. At **Picacho Peak State Park**, visitors came in droves to see the blankets of orange California poppies and purple lupine that covered the grounds. Visitation spiked to the highest numbers in history. The six-year average (2017-2022) visitation in February was 15,760. February 2023 saw 23,268 people at the park. However, the March six-year average of 24,953 was shattered by the **2023 March visitation of 71,537**. Rangers and staff from central office provided additional assistance managing crowds coming through the entrance station, hiking the trails, and parking. With cooler weather lasting longer into the spring season, the flowers also persisted, increasing average April numbers as well.

The previous superbloom in 2019 brought in just over 48,000 visitors, making the March 2023 bloom the best visitation (and flowers) on record. The wildflower season boosted Picacho Peak's rank from 10th most visited state park to 7th.

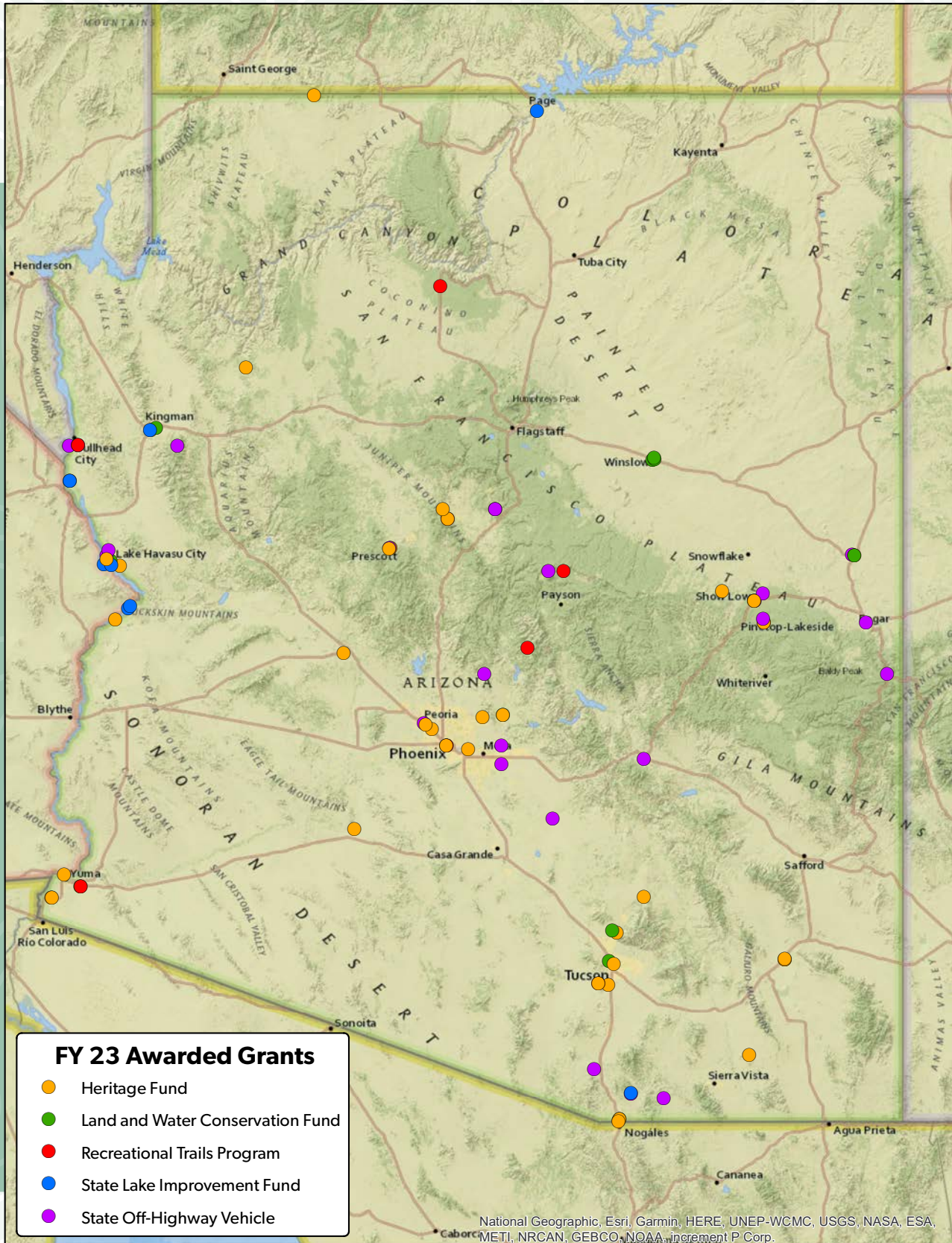
VISITORS CAPTURED A BEAUTIFUL VARIETY OF SUPERBLOOM IMAGES.





GRANTS DISTRIBUTED

The map below shows where the 94 grant funds administered by Arizona State Parks and Trails impacts organizations, agencies, and municipalities throughout the state.



GRANTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



During fiscal year 23, grant programs continued to make a difference in the community with funding for a wide variety of outdoor recreation and historic preservation projects. A total of 94 projects were funded from the Off-Highway Vehicle program (OHV), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF), Recreation Trails Program (RTP), Heritage Fund and Arizona Trail Fund. The total amount Arizona State Parks and Trails awarded was just over \$20 million, and with match, the impact is more than **\$32 million** in outdoor recreation and historic preservation funding.

PROJECTS AWARDED INCLUDE:

- Habitat protection grant for the **Arizona Elk Society** in the amount of \$41,322 (OHV)
- Law enforcement equipment for **Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest** for \$100,000; **Bullhead Police Department** for \$100,000; **Coconino National Forest** for \$93,040 and **St. John’s Police** for \$96,000 (OHV)
- Improvements at **Joaquin Murrieta Park** in Tucson for \$958,419 (LWCF)
- **Naranja Park** skate park for Oro Valley for \$1 million (LWCF)
- Boat launch repair for the **Buckskin Fire District** for \$215,150 (SLIF)
- Law enforcement jet skis for the **Coconio County Sheriff** for \$270,000 (SLIF)
- **East Mesa Loop Trail** for the city of Yuma for \$150,000 (RTP)
- **Ewame Voo’o Cultural Trails** for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe for \$50,000 (RTP)
- **Creek Valley Health Clinic** received \$50,000 to support their mountain bike program (Heritage Fund Environmental Education)
- **Navajo County** received \$100,790 for Pinedale Elementary School preservation (Heritage Fund Historic Preservation)
- **The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation** received \$32,500 for ADA restroom improvements (Heritage Fund Historic Preservation)
- **Hualapai Indian Tribe** received \$158,357 for preservation projects on the Osterman Gas Station (Heritage Fund ARPA)
- **Somerton** received \$150,049 for Perricone Park (Heritage Local, Regional or State Park)

GRANT RECIPIENT

City of Show Low – Show Low Meadow Trail Awarded - \$133,952



Show Low applied for Phase II of the Meadow Trail project and was approved for \$133,952 in Recreational Trails Project (RTP) funding.

Phase I of the trail project was approved by the State Parks Board on April 27, 2019 for \$77,230 and closed out on May 3, 2021. Phase II was approved November 9, 2021 for a total of \$133,952. The project closed out on September 30, 2022. The project was delayed slightly due to the onset of COVID delays in procuring materials.

The scenic Meadow Trail provides nearly two miles of out and back asphalt trail that safely accommodates wheelchairs and other mobility devices. Bench seating and signage are placed at intervals along the path. The city has made other recent improvements to the Meadow that include new ADA restrooms, enlargement of the parking lot, landscaping and a barn pavilion at the trailhead, and gabion basket fencing the length of the property perimeter that stretches along SR260. Along Meadow Trail are ADA-accessible fishing piers, which makes the park attractive to many types of users, including parents with strollers, dog walkers, and individuals in wheelchair and walkers. The site is also a popular venue for Lexington Academy, an education and care services school for students with autism.



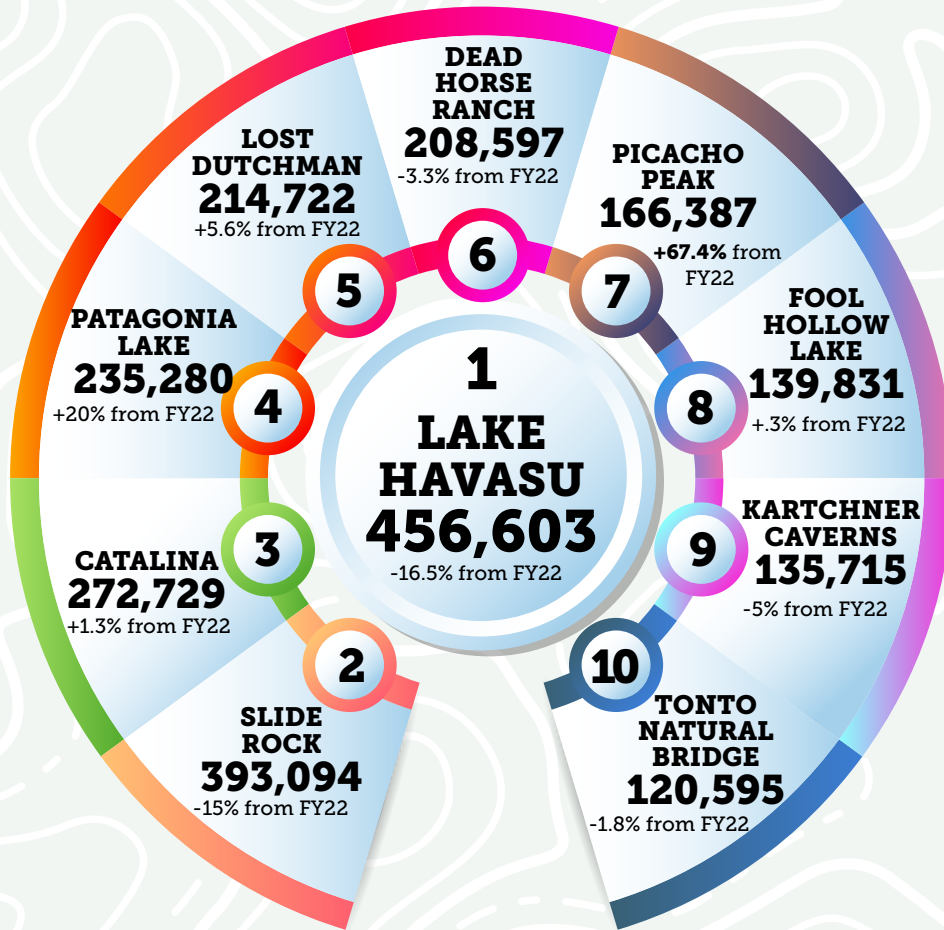
These improvements have all contributed to the positive feedback from the community. The highly visible location of the park in the heart of town attracts visitors and highlights the beauty of Show Low.





VISITATION UPDATE

In FY23, we had **3,042,818 visitors**, a **3% decrease** over FY22.
 More than 74.5%, or 2.34 million people, visited these top 10 parks.



Visitation numbers for the remainder of the parks in order from highest to lowest.

Cattail Cove	84,045	Homolovi	32,363
Red Rock	83,544	Riordan Mansion	31,747
Buckskin Mountain	63,996	River Island	26,366
Alamo Lake	63,779	Colorado River	17,396
Roper Lake	63,204	Granite Mountain Hotshots	17,140
Yuma Territorial Prison	57,926	Fort Verde	10,009
Jerome	47,855	Oracle	8,825
Tombstone Courthouse	38,841	McFarland	8,740
Lyman Lake	36,937	Tubac Presidio	6,486

CELEBRATING VISITORS

TONTO NATURAL BRIDGE STATE PARK



@anajounds



@dennmarries

CATALINA STATE PARK



PICACHO PEAK STATE PARK

@wildsisterou



@austinsullivanphoto

SLIDE ROCK STATE PARK



@tamara.johnson

LAKE HAVASU STATE PARK

Thank you to the more than **THREE MILLION** people who visited the parks last year to enjoy the mountains, deserts, rivers, lakes, trees and wildlife that this amazing state provides.

RED ROCK STATE PARK



LOST DUTCHMAN STATE PARK



CATTAIL COVE STATE PARK



PATAGONIA LAKE STATE PARK



KARTCHNER CAVERNS STATE PARK

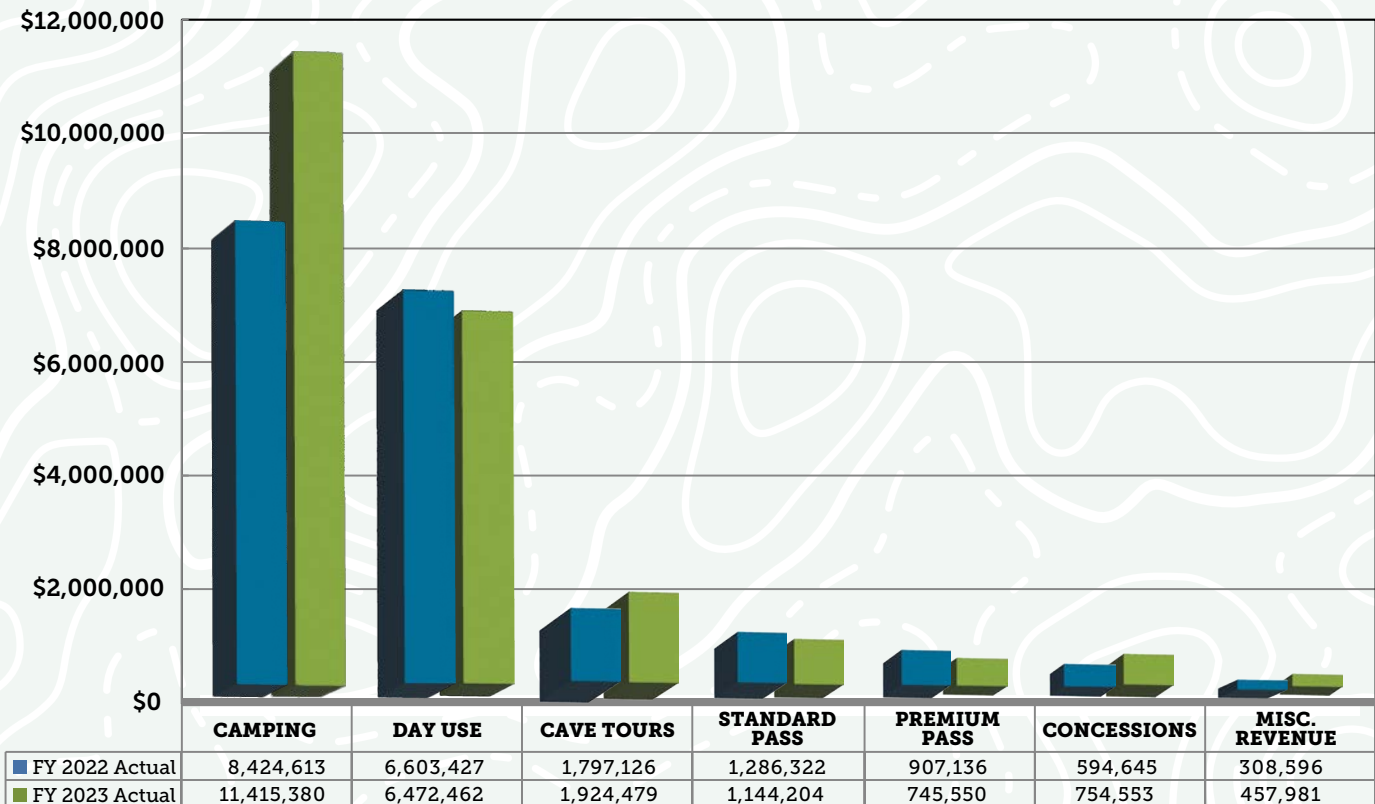


FOOL HOLLOW LAKE RECREATION AREA

FINANCIAL UPDATES

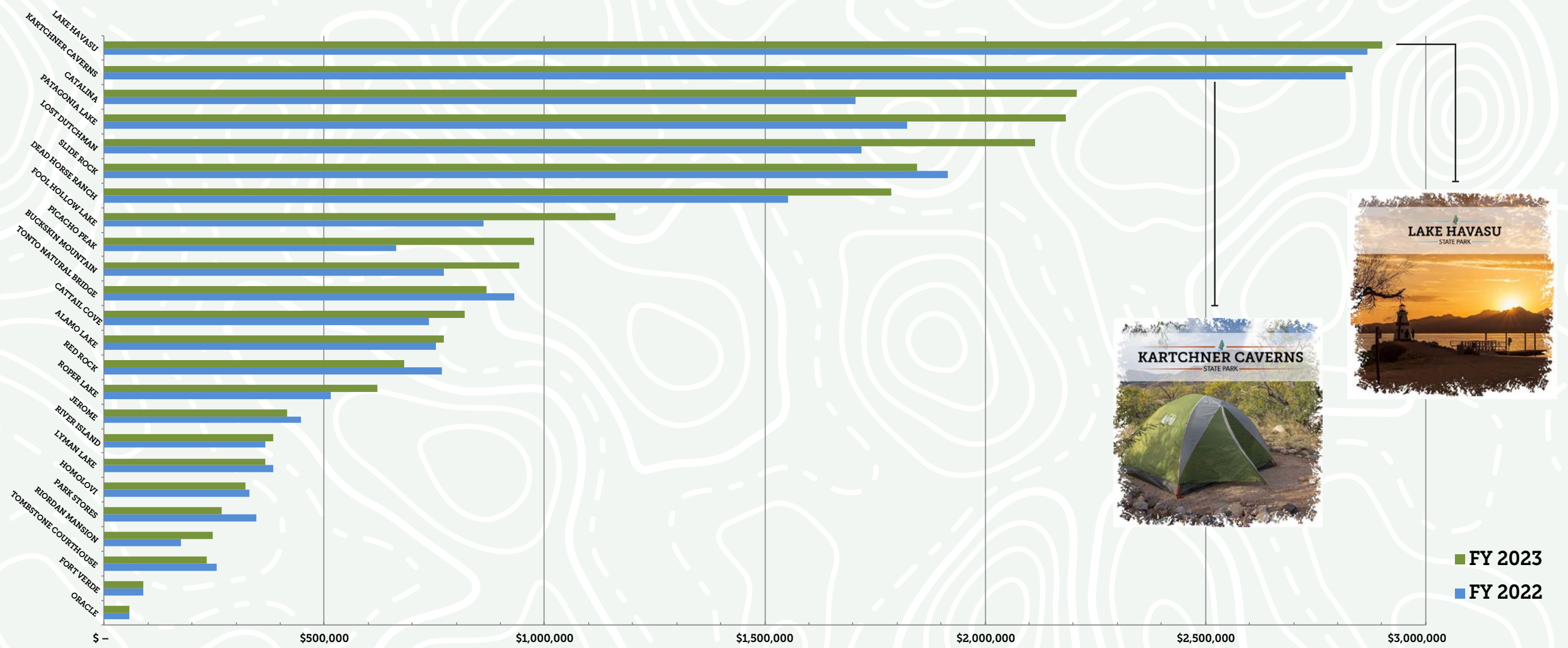
ASPT State Parks Revenue Fund Historical Revenue			
Fiscal Year	Total	Year Over Year Growth	Cumulative Five Year Growth
FY2023	\$22,914,609	1.70%	12.54%
FY2022	\$22,530,939	1.88%	10.65%
FY2021	\$22,115,749	5.98%	8.61%
FY2020	\$20,868,266	-0.80%	2.49%
FY2019	\$21,035,863	3.31%	3.31%

SPRF FY 2022/FY 2023 Revenue Comparison by Type





STATE PARKS REVENUE FUND (SPRF) FY 2023/FY 2022 Revenue Comparison by Park

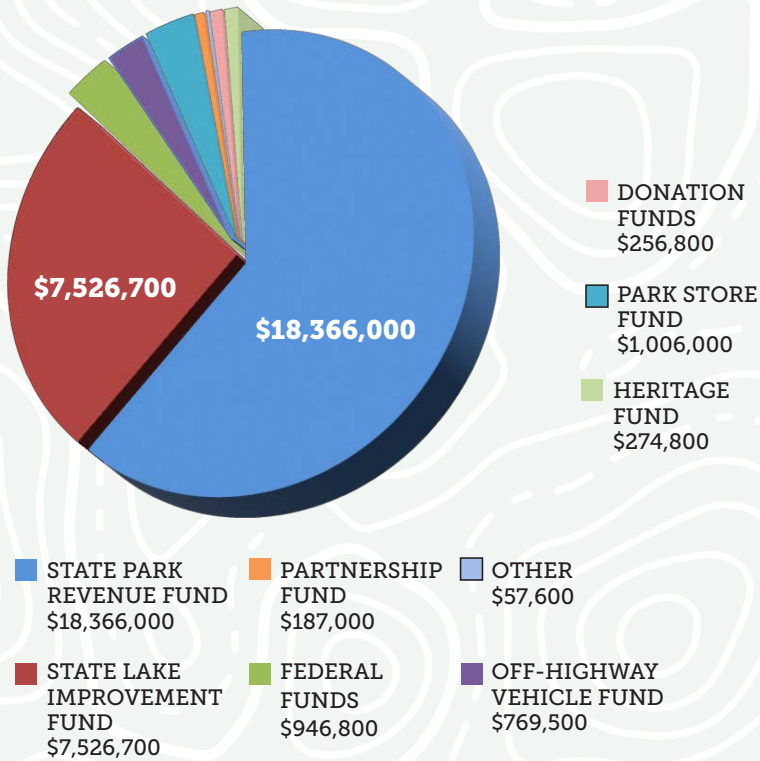


FY 2023
FY 2022



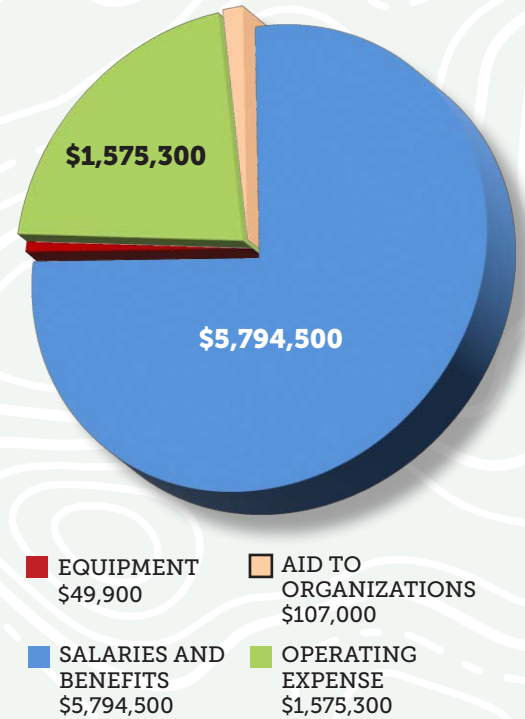
Expenditures by Fund

\$29,391,200



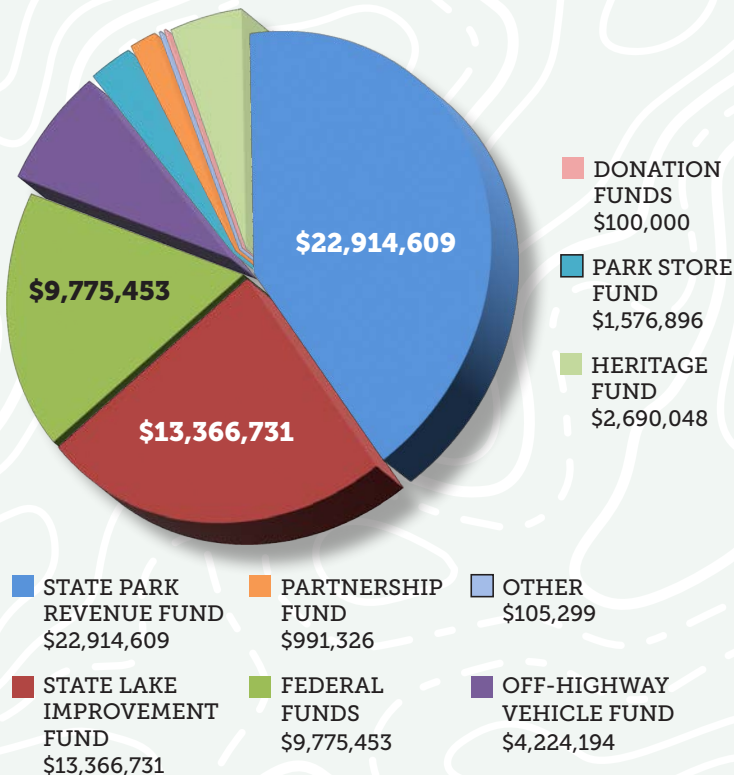
State Lake Improvement Fund Expenditures

\$7,526,700



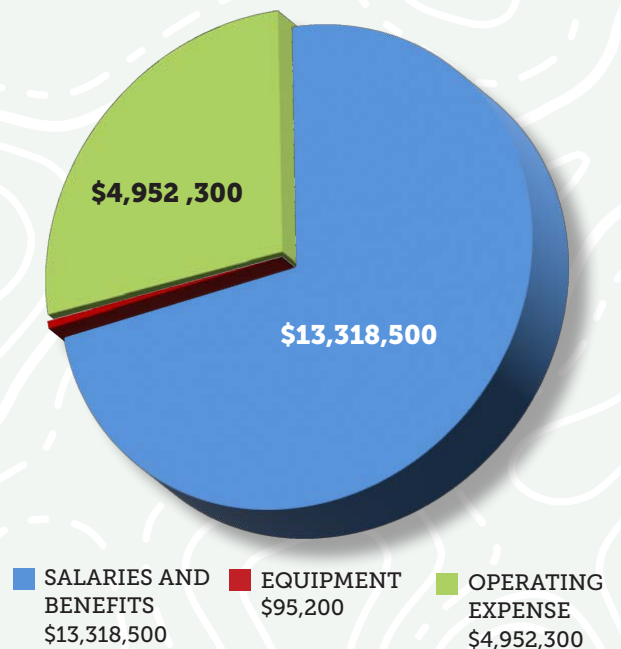
Revenue by Fund

\$55,744,556

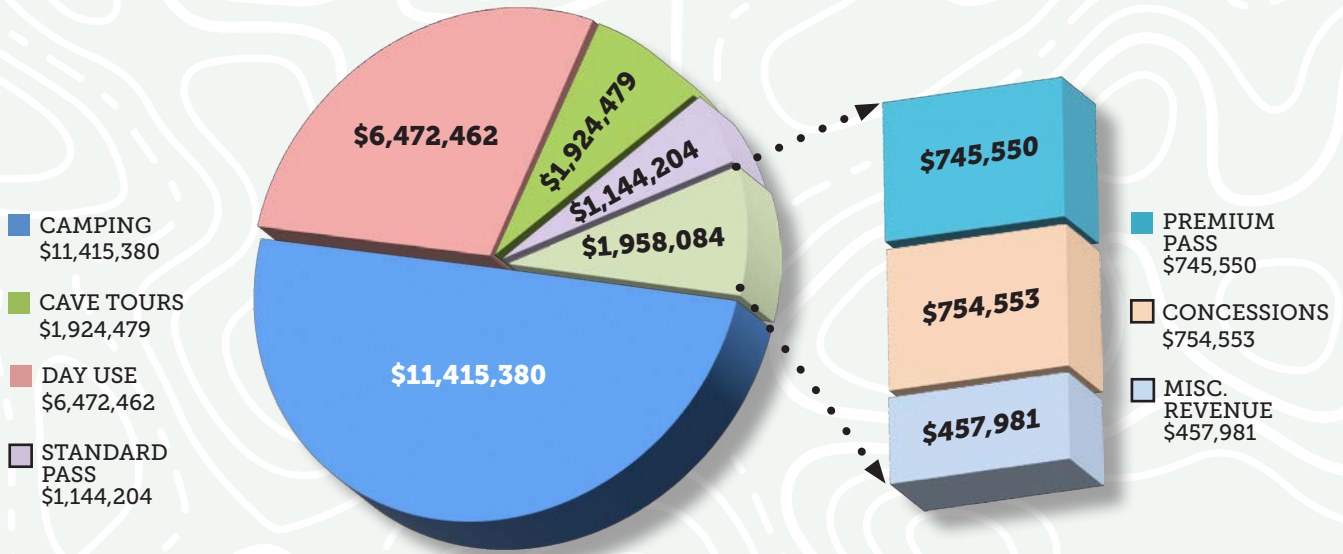


State Parks Revenue Fund Expenditures

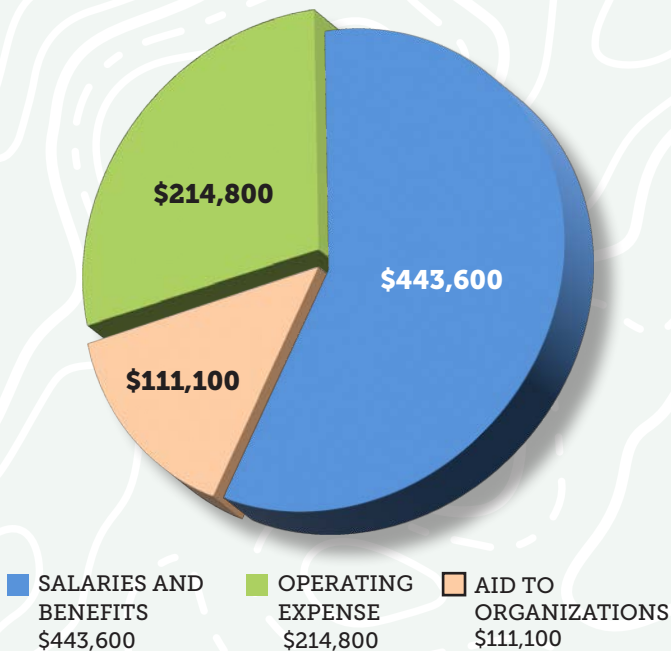
\$18,366,000



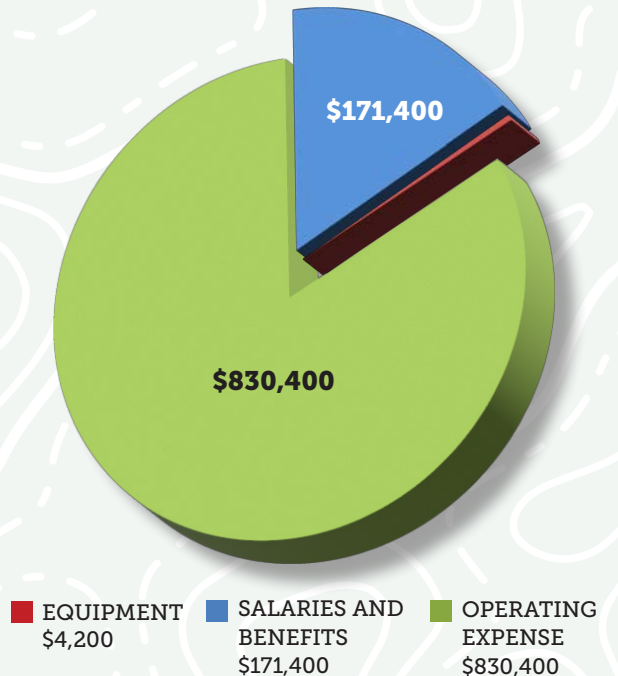
State Parks Revenue Fund Revenue by Type **\$22,914,609**



Off-Highway Vehicle Expenditures **\$769,500**



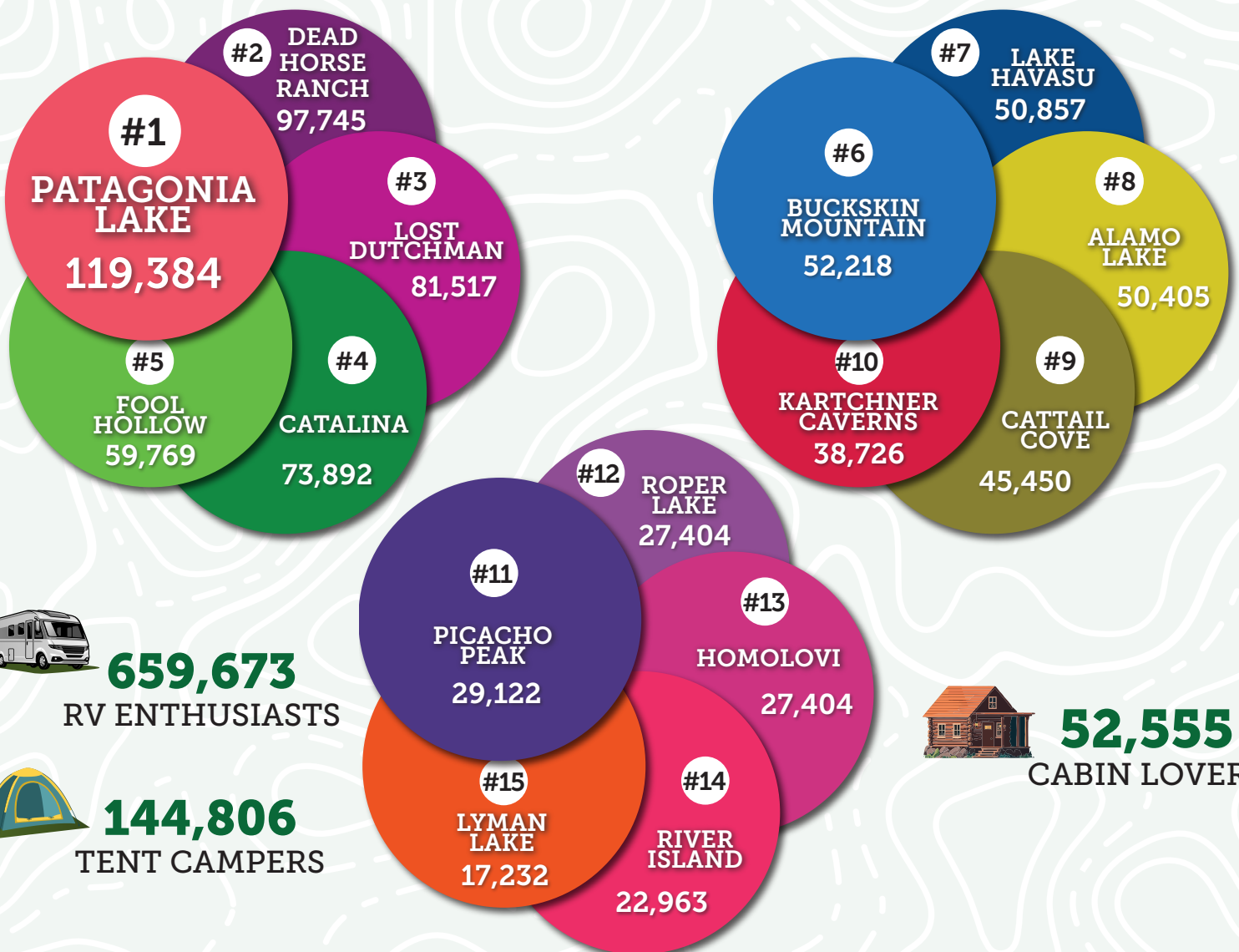
Park Store Expenditures **\$1,006,000**



HAPPY CAMPERS!




The graphs below show the number of total nights visitors spent in FY23 in each of our 15 camping parks from the highest to lowest. The breakouts at the bottom left show total nights for RV, tent, and cabin night stays.




COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT


Arizona State Parks and Trails uses multiple channels to engage visitors and help educate and inform them about visiting and recreating responsibly in the parks. The agency is present on all major social media platforms – Instagram, Facebook, and X (Twitter.) Growth in followers on social media has been steady, with an average **8.2% overall increase across all platforms for FY23.**



164 K



193 K



39 K

The Arizona State Parks and Trails podcast provides education and information about the parks and how to enjoy them, as well as guests with information about topics such as Dark Skies, boating safety, responsible off-highway vehicle use, ecotourism, wildlife conservation, and agency partnerships. In its four seasons, the podcast has 41,170 total downloads, with an average of 686 downloads per episode.

Website visitation is the number one way that the agency reaches visitors and stakeholders. With pages dedicated to each park as well as agency programs like Off-Highway Vehicle use, the State Historic Preservation Office, grants, and volunteering, the website provides in-depth information to foster engagement and increase participation.



Overall, the website receives more than 1 million unique visits each month, reaching ***13.7 million total visits** in FY23.

**Data for website traffic from July 1 to August 16, 2022 was unavailable due to the website migration.*



In FY23, more than **10,200** people downloaded the podcast.

Check out
THE LATEST SEASON!



The agency also produces a monthly consumer newsletter focused on seasonal topics, featured parks, and upcoming events or webinars. **The newsletter reaches approximately 150,000 people and has an average open rate of 40%**, well over the industry average.



LOST DUCHMAN STATE PARK





 **ARIZONA**
STATE PARKS & TRAILS

1110 W Washington Ave. #100
Phoenix, AZ 85007

(602) 542-4174
AZStateParks.com
(877) MY-PARKS



PICACHO PEAK STATE PARK

