

Arizona State Parks and Trails

Fiscal Year 2023 Strategic Plan 2-pager

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Vision: Arizona State Parks and Trails is the leader in sustainable outdoor recreation for current and future generations.

Mission: To manage and conserve Arizona's natural, cultural and recreational resources for the benefit of the people, both in our parks and through our partners.

Agency Description: Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) protects and preserves more than 30 state parks and natural areas. The agency also includes the State Trails Program, outdoor-related grants program, statewide outdoor recreation planning, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program. ASPT not only promotes physical, spiritual and mental health and wellness within our Arizona communities, we help drive the economy, enhance and protect local communities and cultures.

Executive Summary:

In FY22, we began the key statewide planning project - updating our Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) as required by the National Park Service to receive Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF). This project provides the public, land manager and stakeholder community input to identify statewide outdoor recreation priorities, provide guidance for the allocation of resources, collaboration between entities at all jurisdictions (including public and private entities) and draft an implementation plan to ensure that priority issues are addressed by key stakeholders in the next five years.

With the continued record growth in the state's population, our focus on the changing needs of recreational users at parks broadens the agency's role in the Arizona outdoor economy.

Our agency "Breakthrough" of Modernization of Park Operations entered the implementation phase after the selection of a vendor was completed in Q2 of FY22. This enterprise effort provides an integrated reservation system, call center and website.

The agency received significant American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, enabling the launch of a large number of development projects affecting the entire agency park system. These projects will continue through FY24 and will allow the agency to address some long-term issues and resolve deferred maintenance. These updates will make a huge difference in how we are able to serve our guests and provide exemplary experiences.

Summary of Multi-Year Strategic Priorities

| # | Five Year Strategy | Start | Progress / Successes |
|---|--|-------------------|--|
| 1 | Parks - Optimize Park and Trail system vitality | 2020 | The second (& final) phase of the Park Dossier project is completed with 100% of parks completing and actively using their plans. All agency divisions and parks have a documented update plan to ensure information is kept up to date and relevant. The dossiers aid in prioritization efforts for improvements, including infrastructure, programming, & conservation/stewardship. |
| 2 | Partnerships - Grow new, and leverage existing key partnerships to protect the Mission | 2020 | The agency revised our tribal policy outlining ASPT's commitment to enhance our nation-to-nation relationship with federally recognized tribal governments. Continued to grow relationships with key legislators, legislative staff, and Governor's office, which helped us receive our CIP, ARPA, and grant funding. Enhanced our communication with tribes and tribal organizations to promote our grant funds and encourage participation in our SCORP process. SHPO deployed statewide process improvement for state agency compliance with State Historic Preservation Act, resulting in 63% of agencies having a formalized plan for compliance in place. |
| 3 | a) People - Workforce Create an environment to cultivate high performing and engaged workforce | 2020 | Partnering with ADOA, updated 150 positions to the new Ranger series. The updated classifications provide a clear career path to improve employees skills and create subject matter experts to boost employee engagement and maintain strong customer service. Agency participation rate for the 2022 engagement survey rose from 63% in 2021 to 77% in 2022. Six SHPO employees participated in a multistate best practice forum with NM SHPO at the 4/22 AZ/NM Joint History Conference. Park visitation remains high, exceeding monthly targets. The VOC feedback continues to consistently exceed the 90% satisfaction target. Visitor profiles by park, from the Visitor Survey effort, will be completed and published by the close of FY22. |
| | b) People - Customer Deliver exceptional outdoor recreation experiences to highly satisfied & engaged visitors | Split out in 2022 | |
| 4 | Pocketbook - Maximize financial sustainability and revenue growth | 2020 | The "Go-Live" date for the new reservation system and website is 8/1 (Breakthrough project). New Park Store fund provided resources for additional resale inventory, resulting in a better experience for park visitors and increased Park Store sales (up by approx. 50%). |

| Strategy # | FY23 Annual Objectives | Objective Metrics | Annual Initiatives |
|------------|--|--|--|
| 1 | Improve reliability and compliance, and reduce risk of agency core business processes (Breakthrough FY23) | % Resolution of Sunset Audit findings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize actionable Sunset Audit findings based on risk and capability • Create and execute project implementation plan |
| 1 | Complete deployment of new Reservation System and Website | % Incident resolution within timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage implementations according to schedule • Execute communications plan to educate and inform the public about changes to the reservation system and enhanced features now available. • Implement new cancellation policy that will increase availability of reservable inventory to the public and increase optimization of park resources |
| 2 | Increase inter-agency and community partnerships | # Partnership agreements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize key messaging and provide one resource (azstateparks.com) for cross-jurisdictional programs and information. • Partner with state agencies to promote outdoor activities in state parks and amplify messaging about outdoor recreation. • Develop joint programming with established and new organizations |
| 3a | Increase Employee Engagement | # Positions with defined career path | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define career path for position classifications |
| | | # Employee regrettable attrition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze FY22 Engagement Survey results; create and implement plan to address obstacles to engagement |
| 3b | Administer new or expanding funds (e.g. Heritage Park Store, AZ Trail, SLIF) | \$ awarded | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant \$11,682,000 by end of FY23 (<i>Amount to be finalized upon budget signing</i>) |
| 3b | Complete update of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (federally required for eligibility for LWCF dollars) | % Project Milestone completion on schedule | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage public comment period of Draft SCORP • Draft Open Project Selection Criteria document based on SCORP Themes • Final SCORP document with plan for SCORP priorities; gain approvals & implement plan • Governor's execution/signature and National Park Service approval |
| 4 | Execution of Project Plans managing CIP and ARPA (including ARPA-funded ADA projects) | % Milestone completion on schedule | Execute plan to prioritize needs for infrastructure improvements leveraging LWCF & ARPA funds |
| 4 | Streamline the statewide outdoor recreation planning process | # Documented improved processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a formal effort (RFI) to identify other possible options/models for conducting statewide recreation planning. • Evaluate options based on financial and other measures of feasibility |