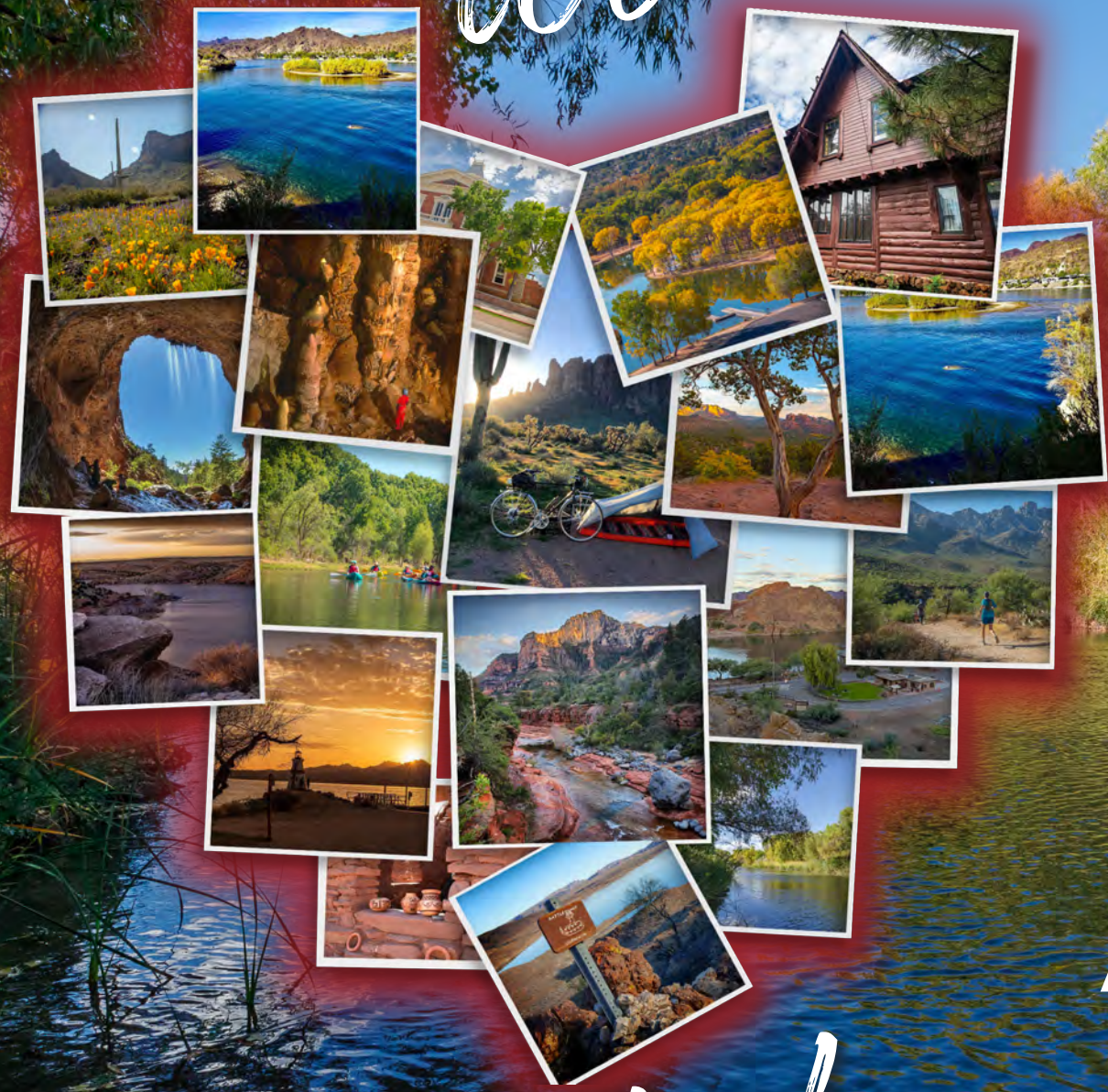


ARIZONA STATE PARKS & TRAILS



We

Parks!

ANNUAL REPORT FY24

ROCKIN' RIVER RANCH STATE PARK, Camp Verde

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ARIZONA STATE PARKS BOARD

DALE LARSEN **CHAIR**
JOHN SEFTON **VICE CHAIR**
JEFF BUCHANAN **MEMBER**
SARAH KING **MEMBER**
TERRI PALMBERG **MEMBER**

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

BOB BROSCHEID **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
SARAH ROSE WEBBER **DEPUTY DIRECTOR**
KEVIN BROCK **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**
MARK WEISE **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**
MICHELLE THOMPSON **DEPUTY ASST DIRECTOR**
KATHRYN LEONARD **STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER**
CORRINA WINANS **HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR**
BRITTANY HUDSON **CHIEF LEGISLATIVE LIAISON**
PAM CASON **EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



BOB BROSCHEID
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In fiscal year 2024, Arizona State Parks and Trails celebrated a major milestone—our first new parks since 2016. Rockin’ River Ranch State Park opened in February 2024 with a grand opening event lead by Governor Katie Hobbs. Located in Camp Verde, Rockin’ River Ranch State Park has hiking trails, picnic areas, fishing, and plenty of wildlife watching. The park offers unparalleled beauty along the Verde River in central Arizona, and developing this park and opening it to the public is a major success to be celebrated.

As we continue to grow and strengthen our agency, we also updated our mission statement. Now, *Arizona State Parks and Trails works to connect people with the outdoors and history of Arizona to build a lifetime of memories.* This mission reflects our agency’s goal of creating spaces for people to spend time, learn about the diversity of Arizona – both naturally and in its history, and preserve those spaces for future generations. To create this new mission statement, we reached out to our team for ideas, and the word “connect” was a common theme.

Through our grant programs, which awarded more than \$20 million in FY24, we connect with communities around the state who are striving to create their own outdoor spaces, or to make outdoor spaces more accessible. Through our volunteers, who contributed more than 178,000 hours of work, we serve visitors to our parks and accomplish much more than we ever could without them. Through our amazing Family Campout Program, we reach families who may have never experienced the outdoors before, teaching them how to camp and enjoy the parks responsibly. And through our planning efforts, we work to create a future of outdoor recreation that serves all communities statewide.

In FY24, we saw an increase in visitation of 2.4%, with Lake Havasu State Park remaining our top-visited park. Arizona’s state parks contribute to the overall economic health of the state, and we’re pleased that visitors continue to choose state parks as a destination.

To have a strong agency, you must have a strong team. Our strategic plan highlights our focus on our workforce and our goal of cultivating high performing and engaged team members. In FY24, we held an All-Employee Conference to bring together the more than 250 employees that are spread across the state. For many, this was an opportunity to meet each other in person for the first time. With parks that are located on opposite ends of a large state, it can be difficult to facilitate in-person time. This conference built relationships, opened doors for idea and resource sharing and gave everyone a chance to learn more about the direction of our agency. We offered training sessions, break out activities, and a real opportunity to connect with each other.

Moving forward, we will continue to connect our communities, our visitors, and our team. We take our role very seriously and understand that our work to preserve and protect more than 64,000 acres of Arizona’s beautiful land is never finished. Our growth, and our commitment to our mission, will drive our success.

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

Bob Broscheid
Executive Director
Arizona State Parks and Trails



LOST DUTCHMAN STATE PARK, Apache Junction

@zonazoo323



TONTÓ NATURAL BRIDGE, STATE PARK, Payson

@laciephotography



STATE PARKS IN MOTION

@wanderlusttravelher

RED ROCK STATE PARK, Sedona



CATALINA STATE PARK, Tucson

@laciephotography



SLIDE ROCK STATE PARK, Sedona

@locksbylola



ORACLE STATE PARK, Oracle

@aschmidt13



DEAD HORSE RANCH, STATE PARK, Cottonwood

@therealrocco_the_doggo



LAKE HAVASU STATE PARK, Lake Havasu City

@dana.k.curtis



FOOL HOLLOW LAKE RECREATION AREA, Show Low

@laciephotography



HEALTHY PARKS



Evidence: Parks Are Really Good for Mental, Physical, and Environmental Health

- Parks promote health by serving as an ideal venue for physical activity, helping to reduce obesity and the risk of numerous diseases . Parks with active amenities and staffed programming, such as walking loops or fitness classes, are associated with significant increases in physical activity.
- Spending time in natural areas, whether walking or reflecting in a garden, is a powerful strategy for improved physical and mental health . There is a vast body of evidence documenting the health benefits, ranging from reduced anxiety and depression to improved birth outcomes.
- Parks provide a platform to bolster social connections through both structured group activities and informal encounters. Social connections improve health, as people who are lonely are more likely to get sick and die younger.
- Parks improve urban environments and help protect residents from the growing threat of climate disasters—heat waves, severe flooding—and other urban health threats such as air, noise, or light pollution.
- Park equity is health equity. Access to parks and green spaces offers especially strong health benefits for people with low incomes—those most likely to be in poor health.

~ “The Power of Parks to Promote Health: A Special Report” by Lisa W. Foderaro and Will Klein, May 24, 2023, Trust for Public Land



VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

RoseMary has volunteered at Catalina State Park since 1995 and says her weekly service has always kept her busy. Nearly three decades ago, RoseMary enjoyed fixing up the trails and today she still keeps the grounds looking great. When we asked her about her experience with the park, she had just wrapped up her volunteer shift for the day, spending her time helping our rangers cut down overgrown branches.

It takes a special person and a true passion to stay with a volunteer role for so long. You can hear RoseMary's love for the park when she speaks about it. She and

her friends used to ride their horses in the area before the park opened in 1983, at times following cattle trails from when the area was used for ranching.

She remembers the park's opening day those 40 years ago. The morning after, RoseMary's husband walked in with a copy of the newspaper and there she was, on the front page in a picture of the event.

Twelve years later, RoseMary decided it was time for her to give back and officially became a volunteer at the park. She's proud of the facility improvements she's seen over the years like the additions of the amphitheater and the bandstand, the expanded equestrian campground corrals and trailer area, the benches, and the beautiful campgrounds. Many of these projects were completed with volunteer labor.

Aside from the good exercise, RoseMary enjoys the beauty of the park's sweeping views of the Catalina Mountains, its stand of saguaros, and all the wildflowers. Visitors enjoy it too, she says. "Being in the park, it just makes people feel good. The hikers are friendly and very happy to be there in the outdoors. They have a lovely place to camp and everybody I've ever spoken to that's camped there has been really appreciative."

In FY24, 799 volunteers contributed 178,575 hours, at a value of \$5.9 million to Arizona State Parks and Trails.

FAMILY CAMPOUT

Arizona State Parks and Trails' Arizona Family Campout program offers families of all ages the chance to enjoy outdoor activities during a weekend camping experience. The program teaches families the basics of tent camping and provides educational presentations on outdoor subjects like geology, geography, birding, astronomy, and more. Arizona State Parks and Trails provides the equipment for the activities and tent camping in each park. Events also include a service project to teach conservation and preservation to new outdoor recreationists.

The Arizona Family Campout program generates a positive impact on the community by teaching current and future generations the skills necessary to recreate responsibly. The program hosts 16 events at various state parks across the state each year, with 10 families attending each campout. Not only does the program support families who are unfamiliar with camping and outdoor recreation, it also allows a safe and fun environment for single parents and grandparents to enjoy a camping trip with their children and opens up the wonder of camping in nature to everyone, including people with disabilities. Testimonials from participants in the last year shared that the program helped build pride and confidence in children through learning new skills in the program, increased confidence in participants to spend more time outdoors, provided access to camping and outdoor recreation equipment that is normally confusing or not otherwise available, and the care, patience, and kindness extended to participants by the program staff.

In March 2024, the Arizona Family Campout program was recognized with a prestigious Award of Distinction for Environmental Education & Communication from Arizona Forward.





Trail use in Arizona has a huge economic impact and also influences the behavior of residents and visitors to the state. According to a 2020 study, the economic value of non-motorized trail use in Arizona by residents is \$8.3 billion per year. For motorized trails, that value is \$5.2 billion. Additionally, 77% of non-motorized trail users, and 8% of motorized trail users, decide where to live based on trail locations. Even among Arizonans who do not participate in trail-based outdoor activities, more than two-thirds report that trail proximity is important when deciding where to live and visit.

Residents who use trails to hike, mountain bike, ride horses, drive dirt bikes, off-highway vehicles (ATVs, 4x4s, side-by-sides) and land managers were asked to participate and help spread the word about this important survey. More than 10,700 surveys were completed.

Every five years, Arizona State Parks and Trails is responsible for the completion of a Trails Plan. This plan guides decision-making and resource allocation for motorized and non-motorized trails across the state. It also aids Arizona State Parks and Trails in developing scoring criteria for the distribution of grant funds for the federal Recreational Trails Program and state generated Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund. In fiscal year 2023 alone, Arizona State Parks and Trails granted \$1.8 million in RTP funding and \$2.9 million in OHV funding.

The 2025 statewide Trails Plan, created in partnership with Partners in Brainstorm and input from a Trails Plan Work Group, which consists of public and private outdoor recreation professionals, trail users, and advocates representing a variety of organizations and use types across the state, will be available in FY25.



TOWN OF RANDOLPH

In April 2024, the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office celebrated recognition for the historic Randolph Townsite in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

The unincorporated Town of Randolph is located in Pinal County, Arizona. Founded in 1925, it is commonly known as the oldest predominantly African American community in Arizona.

By the early 1930s, the community remained a small rural townsite populated by predominantly white farmers and ranchers and a small but growing population of African American, Mexican American, and Native American farm laborers. Migration of black families from the south and Midwest, spurred on by crop failures wrought by the Dust Bowl and opportunities for work and home ownership, resulted in a major demographic shift; by the end of the decade, Randolph was a thriving community with a unique multiethnic African/Native/Mexican American character boasting multiple schools, churches, and restaurants.

While the advent of mechanized cotton production in the 1960s-1980s caused many Randolph families to move to metropolitan centers such as Phoenix and Tucson, descendants still return to the townsite for holidays and reunions and proudly identify themselves as Randolphians. Throughout its development, Randolph has retained its unique heritage, expressed both through its population and its built environment, and today it remains the oldest extant historically Black community in Arizona associated with the Great Migration of the early to mid-20th century.

The National Register is the nation's list of properties considered worthy of preservation. Befitting its unique history and significance within the broader African American community in Arizona, the National Register nomination for Randolph represents a unique property type recognized by the National Parks Service. The Randolph Townsite Historic District is listed as a traditional cultural place in recognition of the role the district plays in both the history and continuing cultural identity of the Randolph community.





ARTIST IN RESIDENCE AT ORACLE STATE PARK

In FY24, the Arizona Commission on the Arts and Arizona State Parks and Trails partnered to pilot the first-ever Arizona State Parks Artist in Residence Program.

Through the residency program, artists spent up to two weeks residing and creating art at Oracle State Park, a 4,000-acre wildlife refuge in the northern foothills of the Catalina Mountains, approximately 35 miles north of Tucson.

Two Arizona artists participated during FY24, Koryn Woodward Wasson in April and Wesley Fawcett Creigh in early May.

Koryn Woodward Wasson is a teaching artist who lives and works in Phoenix with her husband and creative collaborator, Roy Wasson Valle. Together they create large scale interactive installation public artwork. Independently, her work in watercolor and ink centers around storytelling, regarding her everyday interactions with the natural desert world and her relationships with those around her.



Artist in residence Koryn Woodward Wasson puts additional touches on a watercolor that she painted as part of her residency.



Artist in residence Wesley Fawcett Creigh discusses her art installation and presents the interactive art piece she intends to donate to the park.

Wesley Fawcett Creigh is a multi-disciplinary artist based on the land currently known as Tucson, Arizona. In 2008 she completed her Bachelor's Degree at Prescott College in the self-designed major of Public Art with an Emphasis on Social Impact. Employing animation and multimedia installation for her creative projects, she explores modes of visual storytelling using a collaborative approach.



GRANTS DISTRIBUTED

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 89 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.**

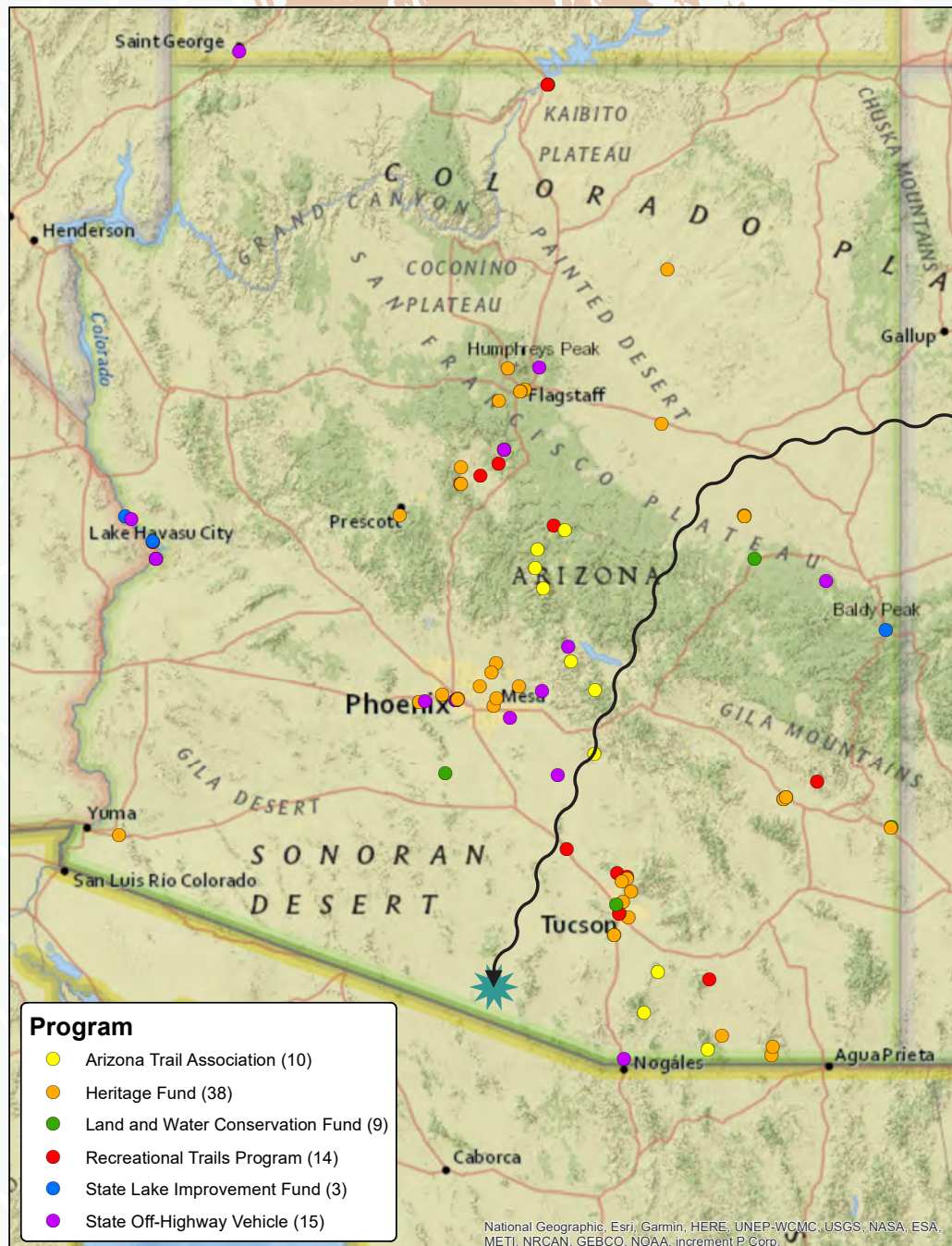
GRANT SUCCESS STORY

Tohono O’odham Wa:k Community Park: The Tohono O’odham Nation is the first tribal community awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant by Arizona State Parks and Trails to develop the Wa:k Community Park. Arizona State Parks and Trails administers LWCF grants to provide needed funding for a wide scope of outdoor recreation projects, including renovation and improvement of public parks, the acquisition of park lands, ADA/accessibility upgrades, and the development of parks and recreational facilities.

The million-dollar grant awarded to the Tohono O’odham Nation in December 2023 will fund a 6.74-acre park located in the San Xavier District, also known as Wa:k, meaning “Place where the water flows back into the ground.” The park will provide community members with opportunities to recreate, featuring a playground, splash pad, exercise stations, walking paths, ramadas, restrooms, barbecue grills, and a series of water detention/retention basins and other flood control mechanisms. The park will also feature a toka field—toka is a traditional Tohono O’odham game that could be considered similar to field hockey. The grant is also funding a 1-mile shared-use path from the community to the park, allowing visitors to safely walk or bike to the park.

This park is part of the Tohono O’odham’s collective vision that addresses the San Xavier District’s social and economic future while preserving its traditions and cultures. Since the LWCF was established, Arizona State Parks and Trails has administered more than \$101 million in grant funding to support 795 projects across Arizona. The projects funded by these grants profoundly touch the communities and lives of Arizonans in all corners of the state.

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





"BENITO"

PATAGONIA LAKE STATE PARK,
Patagonia

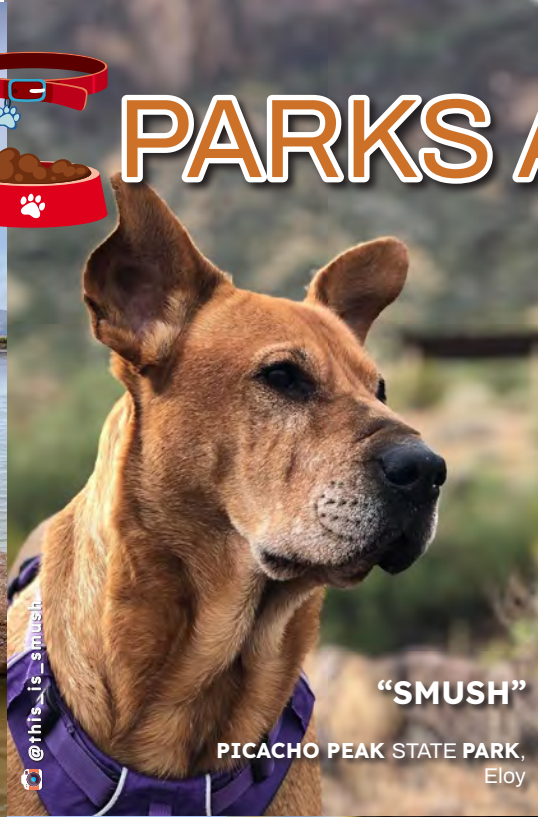
@soy_benitoelgato



"ALLIE & IZAK"

ROPER LAKE STATE PARK,
Safford

@allie_in_wonder_lland



"SMUSH"

PICACHO PEAK STATE PARK,
Eloy

@this_is_smush



"GIZMO"

LOST DUTCHMAN STATE PARK,
Apache Junction

@my_bud_gizmo



"MINKER"

DANKWORTH POND STATE PARK,
Safford

@minkerthestinker



"TATO" LAKE HAVASU STATE PARK, Lake Havasu City

@tato.ontherun



"MYLES"

LYMAN LAKE STATE PARK,
St. Johns

@gopetfriendly



"PROFESSOR X"

CATALINA STATE PARK,
Tucson

@professorxthehikingcat



"GNOCCHI"

LAKE HAVASU STATE PARK,
Lake Havasu City

@mmcaaddzz

VISITATION UPDATE

TOP 10 PARKS VISITED



In FY24, we had **3,116,506 visitors**, a **2.4% increase** over FY23. More than 77.6%, or 2.4 million people, visited the top 10 parks.

Visitation numbers for the remainder of the parks in order from highest:

Red Rock	83,196	River Island	29,231
Cattail Cove	81,659	Riordan Mansion	21,573
Alamo Lake	75,565	Granite Mountain Hotshots	20,673
Roper Lake	70,038	Oracle	12,292
Buckskin Mountain	62,377	Colorado River	12,079
Yuma Territorial Prison	51,557	Fort Verde	9,171
Jerome	45,461	McFarland	8,223
Lyman Lake	40,822	Tubac Presidio	5,249
Tombstone Courthouse	36,176	Rockin' River Ranch	3,507
Homolovi	30,373		

This information shows the number of total nights visitors spent in FY24 in each of our 15 camping parks from the highest to lowest. The photos show total nights for tent, cabin, and RV stays.

Patagonia Lake - 126,806	Lake Havasu - 62,323	Picacho Peak - 40,573
Dead Horse Ranch - 108,785	Alamo Lake - 61,787	Roper Lake - 37,628
Lost Dutchman - 86,357	Buckskin Mountain - 51,247	Homolovi - 26,248
Catalina - 74,054	Cattail Cove - 44,913	Lyman Lake - 23,572
Fool Hollow Lake - 65,689	Kartchner Caverns - 44,166	River Island - 25,046



FOOL HOLLOW LAKE RECREATION AREA, Show Low



LOST DUTCHMAN STATE PARK, Apache Junction



CATALINA STATE PARK, Tucson



148,120
TENT CAMPERS

2% INCREASE



56,301
CABIN LOVERS

7% INCREASE

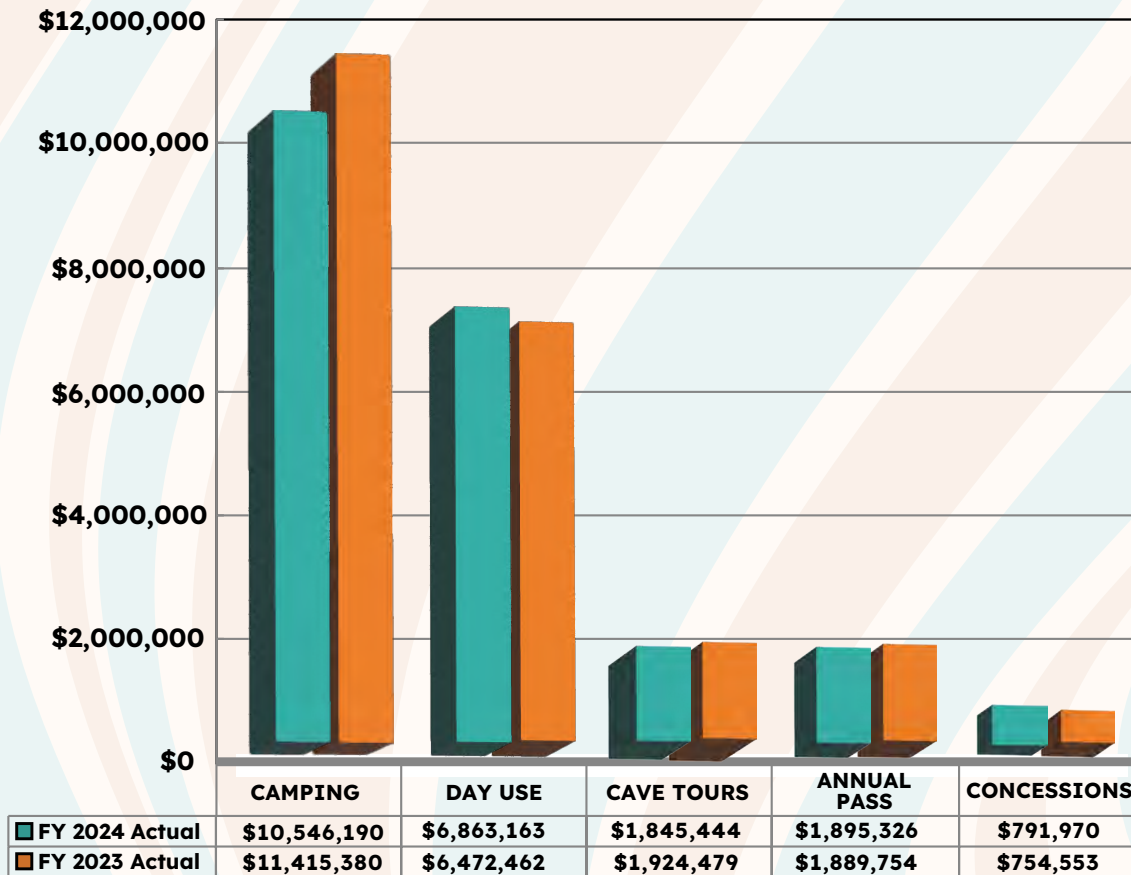


674,773
RV ENTHUSIASTS

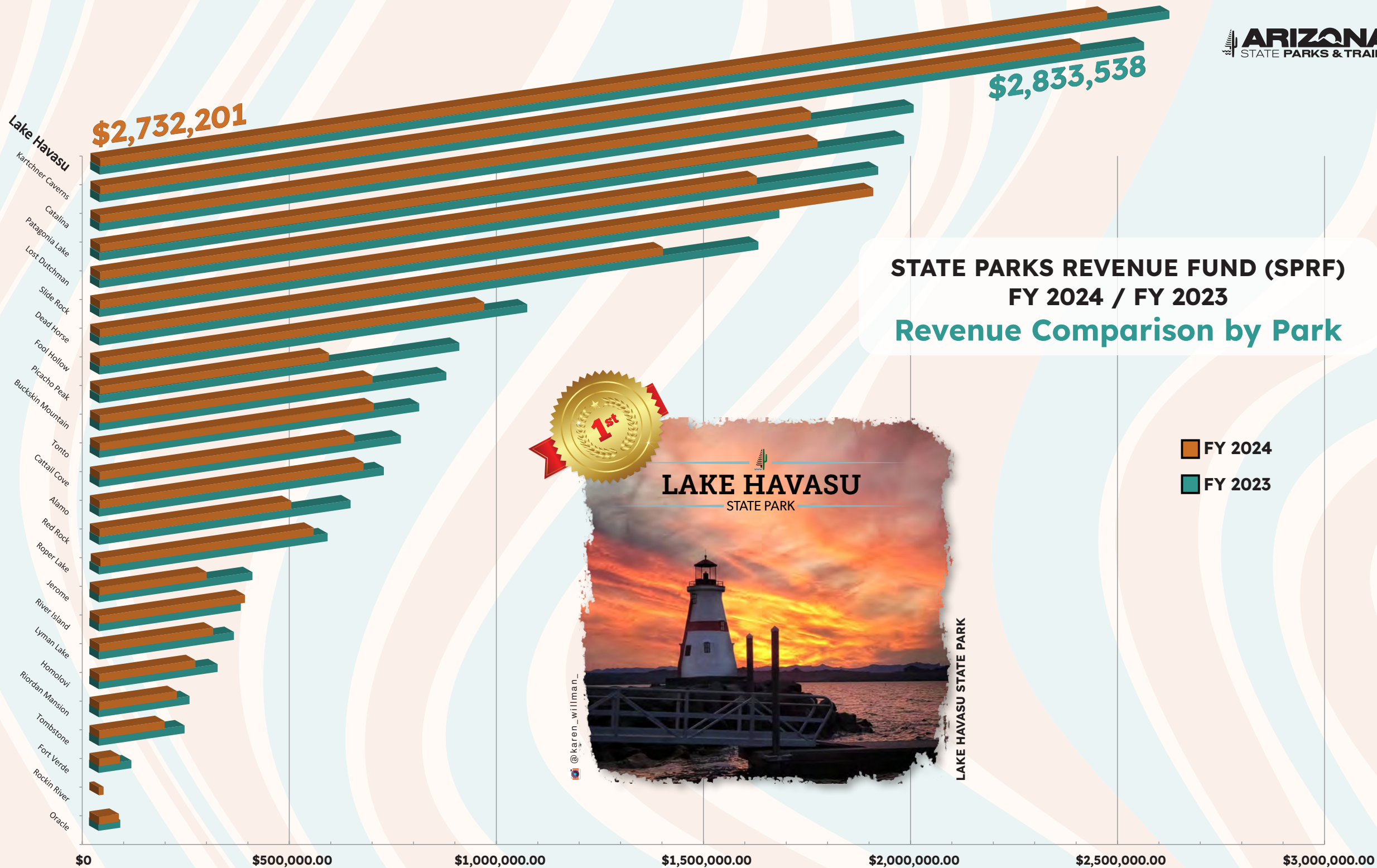
2% INCREASE

REVENUE UPDATES

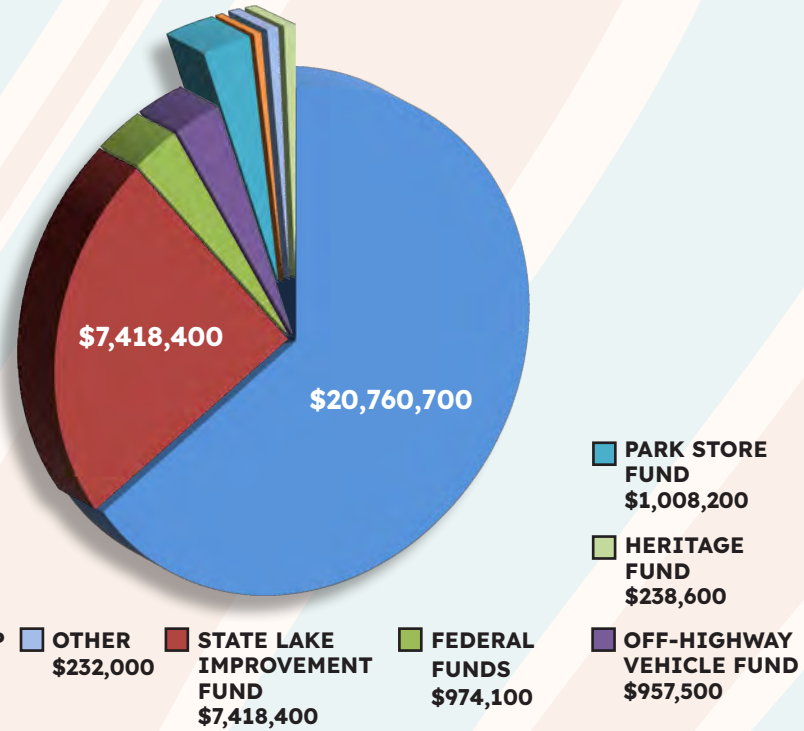
STATE PARKS REVENUE FUND (SPRF) FY 2024 / FY 2023 Revenue Comparison by Type



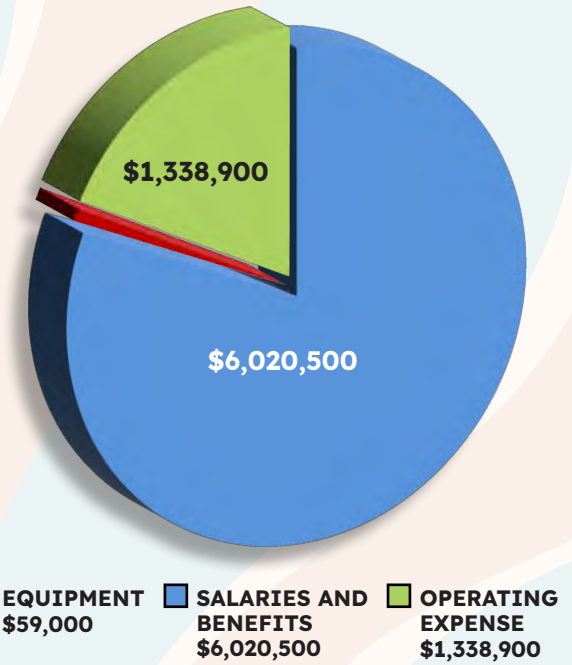
ASPT State Parks Revenue Fund Historical Revenue			
Fiscal Year	Total	Year Over Year Growth	Cumulative Five Year Growth
FY2024	\$21,942,093	-3.44%	5.15%
FY2023	\$22,914,609	1.70%	12.54%
FY2022	\$22,530,939	1.88%	10.65%
FY2021	\$22,115,749	5.98%	8.61%
FY2020	\$20,868,266	-0.80%	2.49%



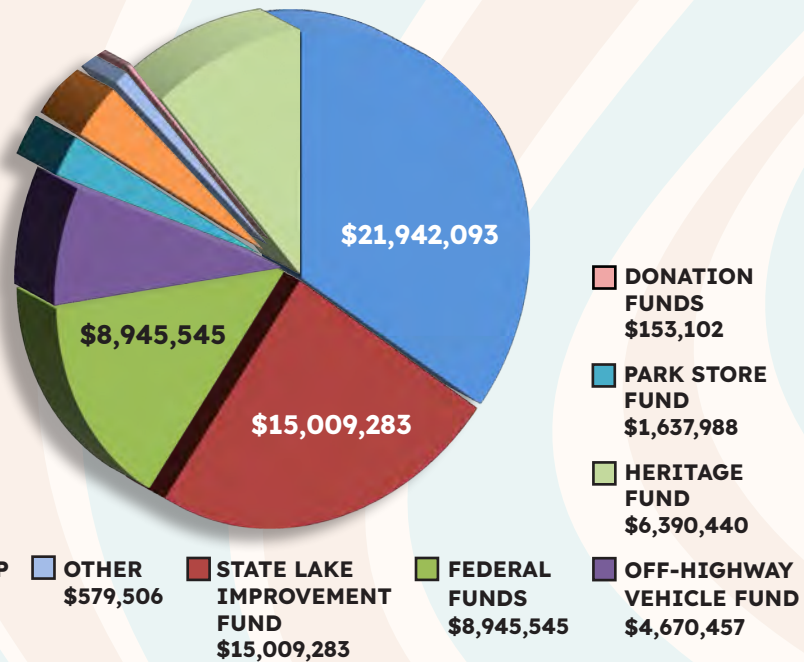
**Expenditures
by Fund**
\$31,741,100



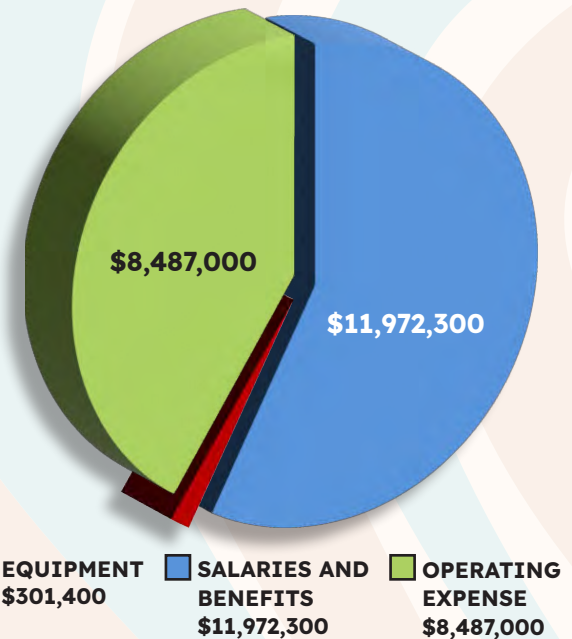
**State Lake Improvement
Fund Expenditures**
\$7,418,400



**Revenue
by Fund**
\$61,484,755



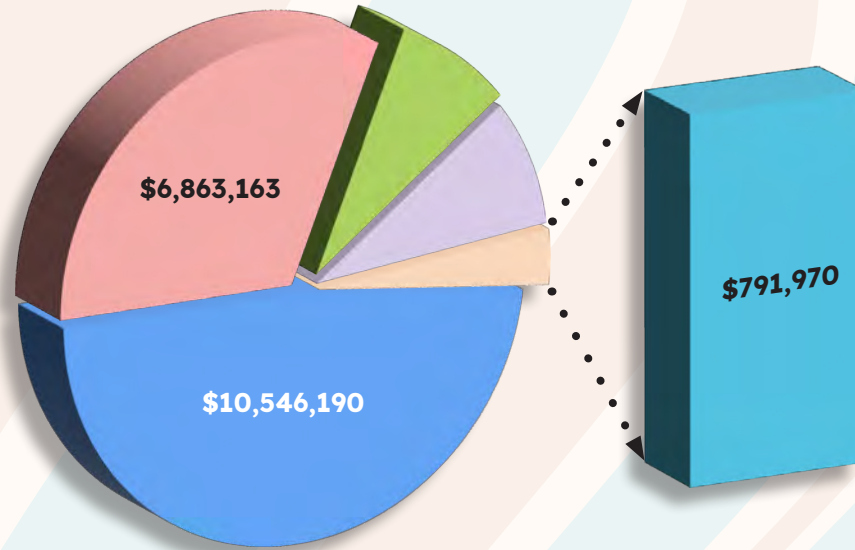
**State Parks Revenue Fund
(SPRF) Expenditures**
\$20,760,700



Revenue by Type

\$21,942,093

- CAMPING
\$10,546,190
- DAY USE
\$6,863,163
- CAVE TOURS
\$1,845,444
- ANNUAL PASS
\$1,895,326
- CONCESSIONS
\$791,970

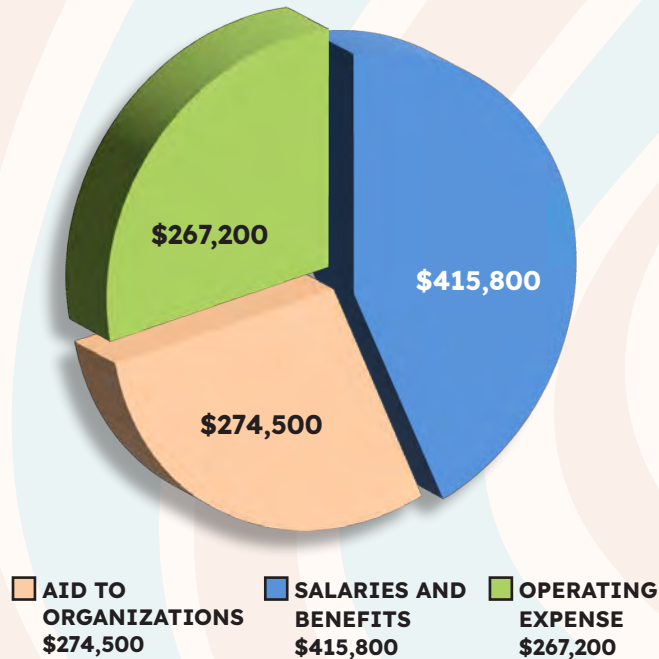


@mellyinthemountains

LOST DUTCHMAN STATE PARK, Apache Junction

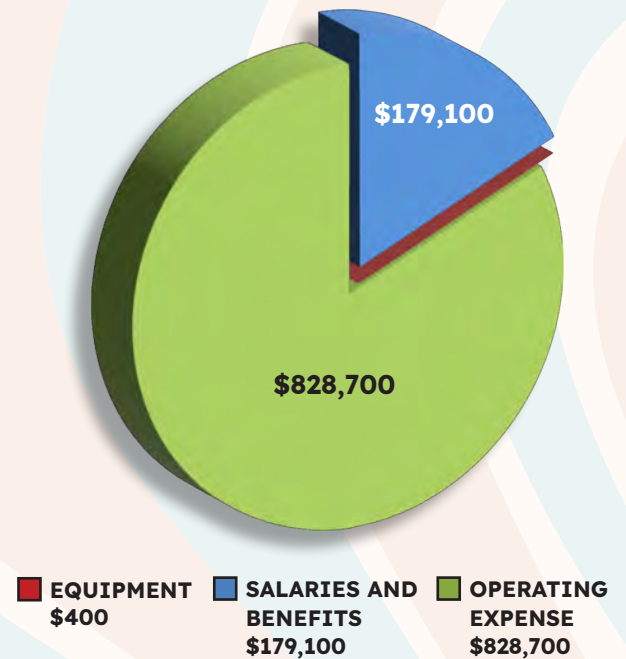
Off-Highway Vehicle Expenditures

\$957,500



Park Store Expenditures

\$1,008,200



BOARD AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Arizona State Parks receives direction and oversight from several advisory committees and groups. The following is a list of those advisory bodies.

ASPB: Arizona State Parks Board

The Board holds meetings throughout the year, guiding staff in accomplishing the agency's mission: Connecting people with the outdoors and history of Arizona to build a lifetime of memories. They also review and approve funding for various grants and discuss topics submitted up through the committees on state parks business.

AORCC: Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission

This group reviews statewide outdoor recreation and lake improvement plans, budget proposals for the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) surcharges, the State Land Improvement Fund (SLIF), and establishes criteria and policies for the equitable distribution of funding, and reviews applications for eligible projects and determines the amount of funding for each project to be funded from the LWCF, SLIF and OHV Recreation Fund.

ASCOT: Arizona State Committee on Trails

ASCOT advises the State Parks Board and staff on the planning, development, funding, maintenance, and promotion of non-motorized recreation in Arizona. They created and oversee the Arizona Premier Trails System, and advise on grants made with federal Recreational Trails Program.

AZSITE:

AZSITE is a Geographic Information System (GIS) that serves as a consolidated informational network of recorded cultural resources; including prehistoric and historic sites and properties, and surface surveys within the state of Arizona and a 40-mile buffer around the state.

HSRC: Historical Sites Review Committee

Members represent a variety of knowledge, expertise, and interest in the fields related to history, prehistoric and historic archaeology, and architectural history or architecture. They review National Register Nominations and provides recommendations for nominating properties to the State and National Register of Historic Places.

OHVAG: Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Group

OHVAG advises the State Parks Board and staff on the planning, development, funding, maintenance, and promotion on off-highway recreation in Arizona. They also advise on grants made with federal Recreational Trails Program funds, and created the OHV Ambassadors, a peer program providing information and education at OHV recreation sites.

OUR *Newest* STATE PARK



Governor Hobbs speaks at the grand opening ceremony.

ROCKIN' RIVER RANCH STATE PARK

For the first time since 2016, Arizona celebrated the opening of a new state park. **Rockin' River Ranch State Park** in Camp Verde was opened and dedicated to the people of Arizona in February 2024. The 209-acre park was acquired in 2008 and sits at the confluence of West Clear Creek and the Verde River. Previously operated as a guest ranch with horse riding and boarding facilities, the park will now offer nearly four miles of multi-use trails, allowing exploration of the pastures, a mesquite bosque, and the riparian zone along the Verde River. Resident and migratory birds and native wildlife are found in the park, and protected and native fish swim in the river.

Prior to its acquisition in 2008, which was first contracted by the Nature Conservancy, the property was in private ownership and operated as a guest ranch with horse riding and boarding facilities.

The Ranch contains an approximately one-mile stretch of the Verde River that supports healthy aquatic habitat and cottonwood-willow riparian vegetation providing habitat for resident and migratory birds and a diversity of native wildlife. Protected native fish, including one federally listed species, are present in the river. The property is in the foraging area for a pair of bald eagles that nest downstream. The mesquite bosque on the adjacent undeveloped terraces also provides habitat for the resident and migratory birds and native wildlife and forms a contiguous corridor with similar habitat on the National Forest lands.

The park provides access to outdoor recreation opportunities like fishing, hiking, and picnicking in the heart of central Arizona and the conservation of the area's rich habitat and natural resources through ASPT stewardship ensures this stretch of river access along the Verde Formation's white cliffs can be treasured by Arizonans for generations.



Grand opening event.



Spring brings queen butterflies to the park.



See amazing wildlife in their natural setting.



Explore lush flora along the river.



Rockin' River Ranch State Park

Trails wind through a mature mesquite bosque and under towering sycamore and cottonwood trees along the banks of the Verde River. This scenic riparian area provides rich habitat for birds and wildlife like javelina, deer, beaver, and otters. Visit AZStateParks.com/Rockin-River.



ARIZONA

STATE PARKS & TRAILS

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