



Alamo Lake



Red Rock



ARIZONA
STATE PARKS & TRAILS

STRATEGIC PLAN
2018 - 2022

Rockin' River Ranch



Havasu Riviera





"Arizona State Parks and Trails exemplify the best of Arizona. We welcome everyone to experience the adventures that our stunning parks offer. This plan is forward-thinking, innovative, and a key component in providing further economic benefits to communities throughout Arizona."

Governor Doug Ducey



Arizona State Parks and Trails has implemented the AMS system plan so that we may prioritize what matters most, and continually assess and adjust our direction in response to a dynamic external environment. Each of these initiatives reflects our optimism and dedication to our park's bright and sustainable future.

Sue Black
Executive Director

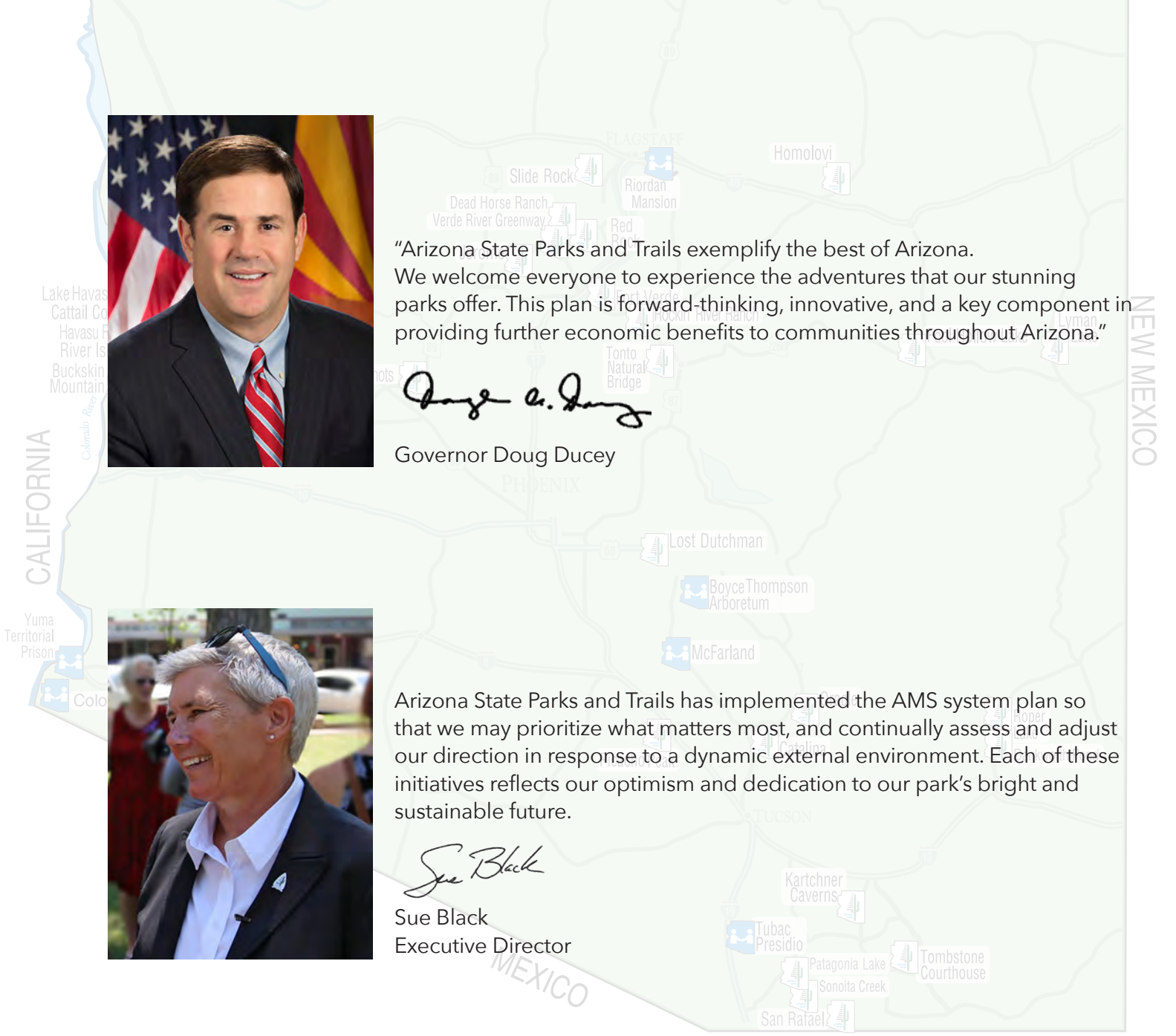
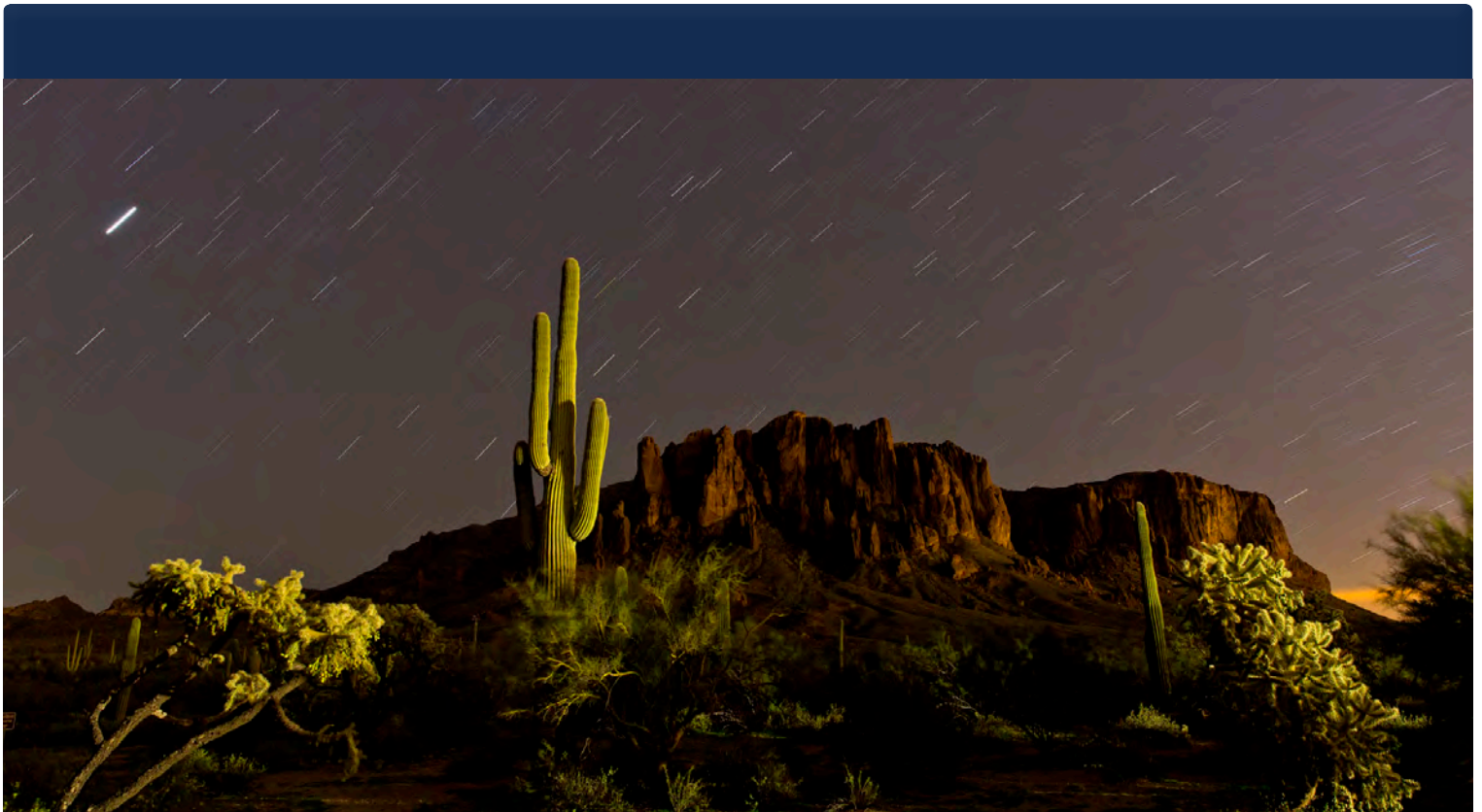


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Lost Dutchman

INTRODUCTION

Our Mission:

Managing and conserving Arizona's natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the benefit of the people, both in our parks, and through our partners.



Tonto Natural Bridge

Arizona State Parks & Trails (ASPT) is celebrating 60 years as an impressive geographically-dispersed system with diverse recreational, educational, and cultural resources. ASPT sets the standard for park agencies by taking a proactive and collaborative approach to opening new state parks while maintaining and improving existing state parks. ASPT is an entrepreneurial agency that receives no dedicated general funds from the State to operate, develop, or maintain properties.



In 2017, the agency was identified as one of the final four State Park systems nation-wide competing for the National Recreation and Parks Association's Gold Medal Award because of the rapid improvement the agency has experienced in the last two years.

Agency Highlights

- The first in the nation to implement Arizona Management System techniques, based on Lean Management principles, in tracking performance.



- The first state park system applying to the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) to acknowledge that the agency is using national best practices in all areas.



GRANITE MOUNTAIN HOTSHOTS MEMORIAL STATE PARK

- Shattered opening records by developing and dedicating the state's first memorial park - only 18 months after land acquisition.



- Surpassing revenue and visitation records across the system.

Accolades

- Kartchner Caverns as the Best Cave and the Best AZ Attraction by USA Today's Reader's Choice Poll
- National Geographic recognized the Verde Valley, which has 5 State Parks, as one of only 22 geotourism destinations worldwide.

ASPT 2018-2022 Strategic Plan presents constituent-centered goals and objectives and creates a framework for the agency's activities. Four strategic pillars emerged through self-assessment and public input that will provide direction over the next five years.



Our Four Pillars

1. Optimizing system vitality
2. Conservation
3. Social equity
4. Thriving individuals and communities

ASPT's four pillars represent a new vision for dealing with budget realities of the last decade while continually improving visitor experiences. Consistent with the Governor's initiative in Arizona - the Arizona Management System - we focus on optimizing agency vitality as our first pillar. This pillar promotes a healthy foundation as a springboard for decades of dynamic growth. The remaining three pillars are consistent with the National Recreation, and Parks Association's vision of community impact. These pillars support Governor Ducey's Healthy & Happy Citizens Priority by delivering a "rich, sustainable natural environment of clear skies, clean water, and lands to roam, work, and play."

Arizona State
Parks & Trails
consists of:

64,000+ 
acres

18 
recreational
parks

9 
historic
parks

6 
partner parks

4 
conservation
& education
parks

3 
natural areas

1 
memorial
park



Picacho Peak



Verde River Greenway



Cattail Cove

PILLAR 1: OPTIMIZE SYSTEM VITALITY



Goal 1: Strategic and responsible investment in resources to promote growth.

Objective 1:

Identify and prioritize opportunities for partnerships, efficiencies, and growth system-wide.

Actions:

1. Analyze agency data to identify untapped opportunities by creating agency-wide and park-specific Arizona Management System business plans.
2. Engage staff, stakeholders, and partners to inventory, evaluate, and improve the system.
3. Introduce new audiences to Arizona State Parks and Trails by growing existing and establishing new special events.
4. Improve agency processes by identifying uses for technology to reduce inefficiencies in processes and to improve communications.
5. Communicate the impact of agency parks and programs by developing economic impact studies that include all agency responsibilities.
6. Provide more overnight access to the public by expanding our cabin program tenfold, doubling our campsites and developing new group campsites to accommodate the needs of previously underserved groups.
7. Create an Arizona State Parks and Trails presence in northern Arizona by adding new parks through innovative and creative partnerships to drive economic impact to rural and urban Arizona.

Goal 2: Foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Objective 1: Be the first State Park agency in the country to achieve and to maintain accreditation through the Commission for the Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

Actions:

1. Ensure that agency policies and procedures are relevant and up-to-date by creating a schedule to review and to update agency plans and policies.
2. Maximize benefit to surrounding communities by enhancing economic impacts through partnerships with community businesses and organizations in our park business plans.
3. Improve agency accountability and transparency by sharing information through the Public Information Office, the agency website, and in public board and commission meetings.



Kartchner Caverns

Objective 2: Create a system throughout the agency that capitalizes on the knowledge, skills, and experience of employees, volunteers, and interns to retain our institutional knowledge while encouraging professional growth.

Actions:

1. Ensure that staff, volunteers, and interns have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities by developing, implementing, and monitoring professional development and training programs.
2. Ensure agency continuity and efficiency by identifying knowledge transfer plans for all positions within the agency.
3. Integrate best practices into agency staffing models and show cost savings related to efficiencies gained.
4. Develop a process for development and retention of agency talent by drafting and implementing succession plans for leadership positions.

Objective 3: Consistently recognize excellence.

Actions:

1. Highlight hard work and commitment by developing internal recognition awards, programs, and events for employees and volunteers.
2. Recognize agency partnerships and programs that significantly contribute to the economic well-being of surrounding communities.
3. Identify best practices engaged in by external partners by applying for awards that highlight successes and best practices.
4. Communicate actions and programs that contribute to agency excellence through the ASPT website, social media, interpretive information available on park, marketing outreach events, and any other available methods.
5. Help grantees gain national and local recognition for their efforts by sharing award nominations and opportunities to participate in professional organizations.

Granite Mountain Hotshots Memorial



River Island



Roper Lake



Jerome



Oracle



Lyman Lake



Tombstone Courthouse



Fort Verde State Historic Park



Homolovi

PILLAR 2: CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES



Goal 1: Improve the user experience and economic development without compromising resources.

Objective 1: Inventory, evaluate, and prioritize natural and cultural resource protection in operations, development, and maintenance processes.

Actions:

1. Provide opportunities for informed agency decision-making and planning by developing natural and cultural resources plans, to include identification of resource tipping points, inventory, and monitoring schedules.
2. Improve agency efficiency by streamlining methods for maintaining compliance and communication with regulatory agencies.
3. Communicate the importance of conservation by identifying economic impact of historic, cultural, and environmental preservation/conservation efforts.
4. Keep the public informed of the agency's conservation-related efforts and successes by communicating natural and cultural resource protection strategies through the ASPT website, social media, park interpretive programming, and all other available methods.

Objective 2: Collaborate and coordinate resource management with other agencies, tribes, and neighboring landowners.

Actions:

1. Coordinate efforts by analyzing partners' plans and priorities and by identifying common goals to develop the coordination of efforts.
2. Support local conservation/preservation partnerships and efforts through training and marketing.
3. Foster relationships with educational institutions to offer mutually beneficial citizen/student research opportunities.
4. Highlight agency efforts to address resource management issues through the ASPT website, social media, park interpretive programming, and other available methods.

Slide Rock



Patagonia Lake



Alamo Lake



Catalina



Buckskin Mountain

Goal 2: Foster stewardship through education, awareness, and engagement.

Objective 1: Engage youth to build a conservation ethic.

Actions:

1. Collaborate with local schools and youth-serving organizations to provide opportunities to develop interactive interpretive and environmental education programs that communicate the value of parks and open space.
2. Participate with state and local groups to foster program services for youth.
3. Utilize youth in producing resource-related marketing messages for the agency (e.g., creating blogs, testimonials, etc. for the internet and social media).



AZ Family Campout - Fool Hollow Lake

Objective 2: Connect parks and programs to people and communities.

Actions:

1. Keep stakeholders apprised of park programs and events and encourage their participation by inviting elected officials, surrounding community partners, stakeholders, and media to participate in park events/volunteer opportunities.
2. Standardize agency operations by implementing an agency-wide program service plan.
3. Increase visitation in the agency and target the marketing strategies with the highest return on investment by implementing a communication and marketing plan for the agency.

Bat Day - Kartchner Caverns





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OVH



Verde River State Natural Area

PILLAR 3: SOCIAL EQUITY

Goal 1: Understand the needs of diverse user groups.

Objective 1: Collaborate with underrepresented groups and agencies to understand the barriers, needs, and preferences of all current and potential user groups.

Actions:

1. Include groups that have been traditionally underrepresented as visitors to Arizona State Parks & Trails by collecting data to understand recreation trends for these groups and to develop plans for inclusion.
2. Highlight the value of inclusive practices to staff, partners, and stakeholders by researching and communicating the economic impact associated with these practices.
3. Work with partners who have developed programs and services for underrepresented populations to integrate inclusive strategies in recreation programming at parks.
4. Communicate methods of addressing previously unmet needs through the ASPT website, social media, park interpretive programming, and all other available methods.

Goal 2: Increase diversity in the workforce.

Objective 1: Aim to reflect the state's changing demographics in staff and volunteer levels.

Actions:

1. Increase underrepresented populations among staff and volunteers by actively recruiting among underserved/underrepresented populations.
2. Promote opportunities for ASPT staff to engage in leadership roles in strategy development to increase agency diversity.
3. Work with other state agencies and partners by identifying and participating in opportunities to discuss the issue of increasing diversity in the workplace.

Arizona Family Campout



Yavapai-Apache Nation Cultural Awareness Day



Granite Mountain Hotshots Memorial



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Kartchner Caverns



OHV



Catalina

PILLAR 4: THRIVING INDIVIDUALS & COMMUNITIES



Goal 1: Develop and nurture the connections between parks and communities.

Objective 1: Link parks and trails to enhance economic, geographic, and physical fitness opportunities.

Actions:

1. Increase geographical connectivity statewide by identifying ASPT properties that may be conduits to achieving connectivity across local jurisdictions.
2. Improve health outcomes for Arizonans by partnering with local organizations to provide health and wellness education programs and activities.
3. Communicate the value of connecting recreational resources by developing a summary of anticipated economic benefits locally and regionally.

Objective 2: Collaborate with community partners to grow a sense of place.

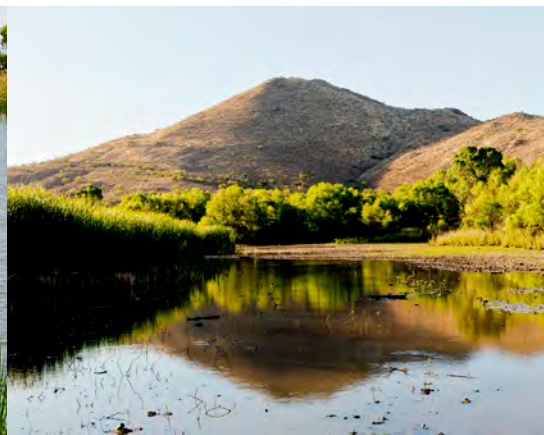
Actions:

- 1.** Expand networks and leverage resources by participating in partnerships with local advocacy groups, organizations, and entities by attending meetings to encourage and enhance visitor experiences.
- 2.** Increase unique products available to visitors by working with local businesses to provide products 1) made in Arizona, and 2) made in the USA. Profits from these products are secondary to celebrating local and national artisans.
- 3.** Work with communities, local businesses, and others by meeting with local partners to identify unique community attractions, events, businesses, arts & crafts, etc. that contribute to a unique sense of place.

Dankworth Pond



Sonoita Creek



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Lake Havasu



ARIZONA

STATE PARKS & TRAILS

