



YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA CORPORATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

A riverfront revitalized ... and a commitment to sustain the gains



Letter from the Chair

Above: A view from the Herb Guenther Scenic Overlook

2014 was another year of progress for the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. We were able to establish a strong working relationship with the Bureau of Reclamation and our other partners to cement long-term maintenance funding for the Yuma East Wetlands. Through the efforts of staff, volunteers, and community donors, the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park is now operationally self-sufficient without state or city funding. Through a private foundation grant, we have developed a great new vision for the Quartermaster Depot State Historic Park.

This Annual Report also discusses initiatives to enhance the West Wetlands, the Arizona Historical Society, and Yuma's historic properties as well as to help carry out the City's Centennial celebration. In 2014, the community also honored Judge

John Roll in the dedication and naming of Yuma's Federal Courthouse in the downtown riverfront.

A key issue facing the Heritage Area is Congressional reauthorization of the National Heritage Area, which was to end on September 30, 2015. In December 2014, Congress approved a seven-year extension. We are grateful to the Yuma community and Arizona Congressional delegation, particularly Senator McCain, for their support of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. This provides much needed funding stability from our federal partner.

We look forward to continued success in 2015.

Thomas Rushin
Chair, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area



Arizona State Parks in Yuma

The Heritage Area has successfully completed its 5th year of operating the state parks in Yuma, when in 2010 state budget cuts threatened their closure. Through the efforts of a dedicated staff and core of volunteers, the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park has not only achieved operational self-sufficiency, but is now able to invest in major improvements and address long-deferred maintenance. In 2014, the Heritage Area installed audio systems in the cells which brought the voices of long-past prisoners to life. “Bad Girls of the West,” a major new exhibit on women prisoners, also opened. Some much-needed maintenance of the cell block area was undertaken to ensure visitor safety.

A \$40,000 grant was secured from the National Park Service and initial Section 106 consultation was completed to rebuild the prison walls on either side of the Sally Port. Design should move forward in 2015, with the west side wall the first priority for construction.

The approach to the Quartermaster Depot State Historic Park, which has never had the market appeal of the Prison, is different. The master plan calls for the park to tell the story of the past, present, and future of the Colorado River. A planning grant from the Walton Family Foundation allowed the development of an ambitious plan. View a copy of this plan on the Heritage Area website: www.yumaheritage.com.

PHOTOS From top, clockwise: An interpretation of the Yuma Territorial Prison North Wall • The Quartermaster Depot interpretive steamboat abstraction and restored Storehouse • The restored Sally Port

Wetlands Restoration— in Yuma East Wetlands and beyond

2014 saw the implementation of the long-term maintenance program in partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation’s Multi-Species Conservation Program (MSCP), Bureau of Reclamation, Quechan Indian Tribe, City of Yuma, and Arizona Game and Fish Commission. While the Heritage Area manages day to day operations and holds the 404 Permit, the Bureau of Reclamation is responsible for pump maintenance and any potential capital upgrades to the irrigation system. The irrigation systems are, of course, the life blood to the 350 restored acres of wetlands. This is an important partnership critical to the sustainability of the Yuma East Wetlands.

The Heritage Area has also been a leader in wetlands restoration efforts well beyond Yuma. In 2014, the Heritage Area completed its two years of initial maintenance on the restoration at Hunters Hole and turned over long-term maintenance to the MSCP. The project was funded entirely without NPS or City of Yuma funds. Initial planning, permitting, and construction documents were funded through the Walton Family Foundation, with construction and initial maintenance funded by the Arizona Water Protection Fund. In conjunction with ProNatura, a Mexican NGO, this project is considered a model for bi-national cooperation in support of wetlands restoration in the desert Southwest. The Heritage Area also has a Cooperative Agreement with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to assist them in restoration efforts at Betty’s Kitchen northeast of Yuma.

2014 Excellence on the Waterfront Award

The Heritage Area was one of 11 winners of the prestigious Excellence on the Waterfront international awards by the Waterfront Center at its annual conference November 7, 2014 in Washington, D.C. The project honor award in the environmental/mixed use category was the result of the vast transformation of Yuma’s Colorado Riverfront. The Heritage Area’s environmental restoration and economic revitalization efforts have restored hundreds of acres of wetlands, spurred commercial development, and established major park and trail installations along the riverfront.





West Wetlands

In 2009, the Heritage Area assisted the City of Yuma’s Parks and Recreation Department in updating its master plan for those portions of West Wetlands park which are yet to be completed. Since then, the Heritage Area has focused its efforts along the river—securing grants from the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park Service to clear non-native vegetation, plant the bank line, and develop a trail system and interpretive signage. The Heritage Area is also working with the City’s Parks and Recreation Department to expand recreational opportunities along the river. Heritage Area staff teamed up with the City to make possible the opening of “Centennial Beach” during those celebrations in April 2014. Planning is now proceeding on another beach in the western part of the park.

Centennial

The Heritage Area was asked by the City of Yuma to assist in the management of events and activities associated with the City of Yuma’s celebration of its 100th anniversary. The week of April 7th featured six days of spectacular events, kicking off with Governor Jan Brewer’s dedication of historic Main Street’s new entryway signs and the sealing of a time capsule, followed by a community old-fashioned ice cream social. A community BBQ was held at the Quartermaster Depot on Tuesday, followed by the opening of a photo display of historic Yuma at the Yuma Art Center on Wednesday. On Thursday, the community turned out in full force at West Wetlands to break the Guinness Book of World Records for a mass aerial photograph. The new beach at West Wetlands was dedicated, and a gigantic fireworks display topped off the night. On Friday, a block party rocked Main Street. On Saturday, thousands flocked to the Desert Sun Stadium for an all-day concert (called “Tunes and Tacos”), which featured Creedence Clearwater Revisited and Lonestar.



Clockwise from top: A bike rider enjoying the Yuma East Wetlands bike path • Yuma Centennial opening ceremony with Governor Jan Brewer • Yuma Centennial Guinness World Record attempt • Yuma West Wetlands cleared bank line and trail system construction • Centennial Beach



Sanguinetti House Museum photos

- *Top* : Interpretive exhibit area
- *Top right*: Revitalized historic dining room
- *Bottom left*: Custom E.F. Sanguinetti family mural
- *Bottom right*: Restored garden and exterior museum improvements

Arizona Historical Society

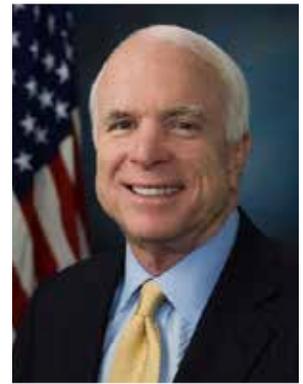
A key element of the Brinley Historic District is the Arizona Historical Society’s Yuma museum and campus along Madison Avenue. Originally the home and gardens of E.F. Sanguinetti (one of Yuma’s leading business and civic leaders), the property was donated to the Historical Society 50 years ago. With state funds shrinking and the facility in need of revitalization, the local Yuma County Historical Society stepped forward to generate funds and volunteers. What was needed, however, was a clear and compelling vision for the future of the museum and campus.

The Heritage Area assembled a team to develop a new plan, collaborating with all state and local partners. The result was “ Arizona Historical Society’s Yuma Campus: A New Vision” (available at www.yumaheritage.com), which contained both a long-term vision along with concrete and visible “early action” projects which generate public interest, enthusiasm, and credibility for the project. 2014 saw the unleashing of tremendous commitment of volunteer time, donor support, and significant on-the-ground progress.

Economic and Community Impact Analysis

As part of the National Park Service’s ongoing evaluation process of National Heritage Areas, the independent consulting firm of Tripp Umbach completed a study of the impact of three National Heritage Areas—one of which was Yuma—on their respective economies and communities.

The February 2014 study documented that the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area directly and indirectly generates \$22.7 million per year in Arizona, creates and supports 277 jobs, and generates \$1.3 million in tax revenues for state and local economies. The full study can be accessed on the Heritage Area’s website at www.yumaheritage.com.



Quechan Riverfront

The Quechan Indian Tribe has put together a plan for the redevelopment of their downtown riverfront—a plan which reflects their culture and values while complementing the City’s improvements at Gateway Park. First phase work began by clearing non-native vegetation. The next steps make the cleared area accessible to the public. The Heritage Area will continue to support these efforts to complete the beautification of Yuma’s downtown riverfront.

Reauthorization by Congress

In 2000, the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area was authorized by Congress for an initial 15 year period, which was set to expire on September 30, 2015. Without a renewal, the Heritage Area would have been denied access of funds from the National Park Service to implement and maintain riverfront improvements. In early 2014, Senator John McCain introduced legislation to reauthorize the Heritage Area for another 15 years, as did Congressmen Raul Grijalva and Ed Pastor.

Hearings in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources were held in June, during which the National Park Service testified favorably.

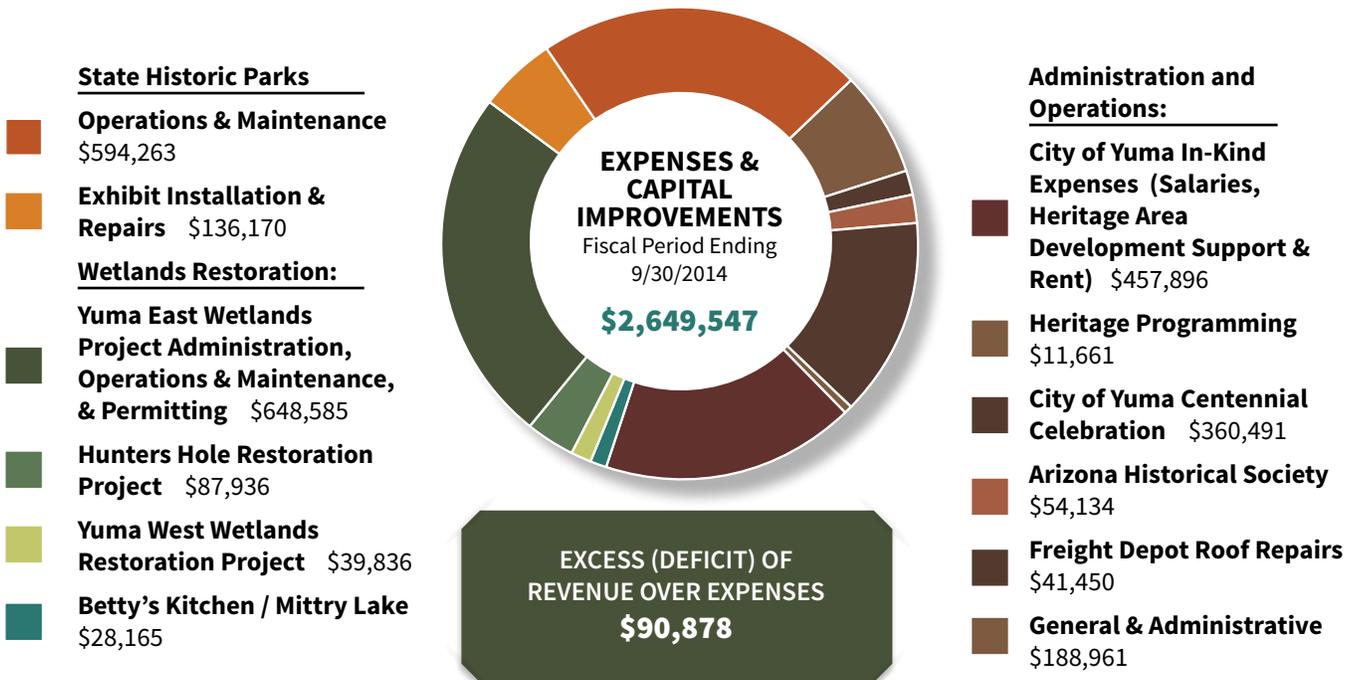
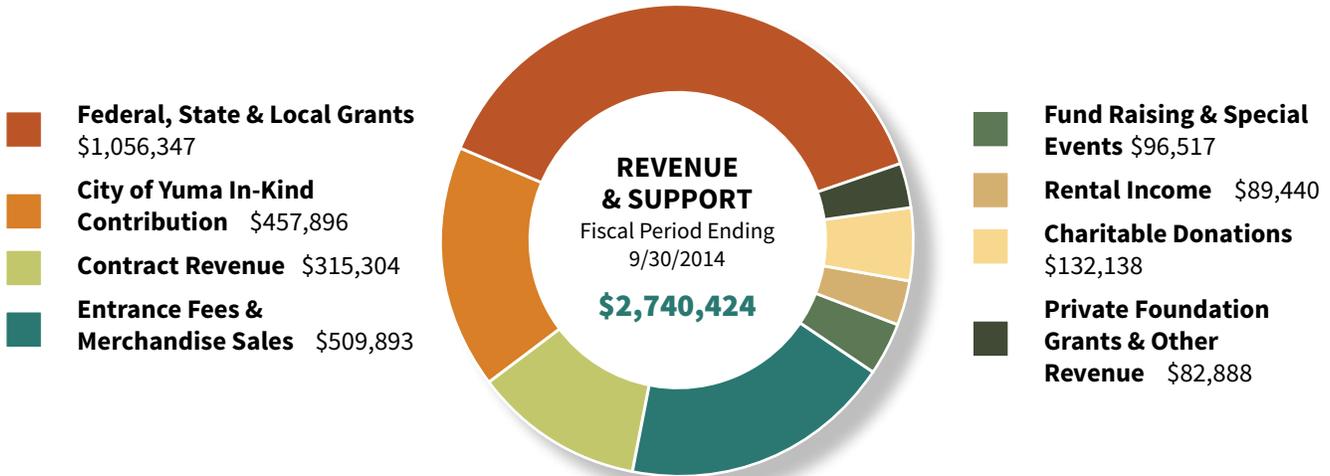
In December 2014, Senator McCain was successful in including a seven-year extension as part of a larger Public Lands bill which passed Congress and was signed into the law by the President. The Heritage Area not only thanks Senator McCain, but wants to express its appreciation to the City of Yuma, Yuma County, and the Quechan Indian Tribe for the resolutions they approved in support of reauthorization.

In addition, the Board and staff of the Heritage Area recognize the outpouring of support from the community which helped propel this success. This will allow the Heritage Area to maintain momentum for all the improvements taking place all along Yuma’s riverfront.

- Top: Quechan riverfront interpretive plan
- Bottom left: Quechan riverfront
- Bottom center: John M. Roll Federal Courthouse
- Bottom right: Senator John McCain

YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA | STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Fiscal Period Ending September 30, 2014



Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area
180 W. 1st Street, Suite E
Yuma, Arizona 85364
(928) 373-5198
www.yumaheritage.com

Yuma Territorial Prison

Entrance Fees & Merchandise Sales by Calendar Year

