

Moving Forward

ANNUAL REPORT | FISCAL YEAR 2017/2018





LETTER FROM THE CHAIR | BRIAN GOLDING, SR.



2018 marks my second year as Chairman of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, following in the footsteps of past Chairs Steve Bell, Gary Munk, Patricia Ware, and Tom Rushin who guided Yuma's riverfront redevelopment since 2002. Aided by many partners, volunteers, and a dedicated staff, we have seen the completion of several beautiful riverfront parks, an extensive multi-use trail system, 400 acres of restored wetlands, major private investment on the downtown riverfront and the saving of Yuma's two state historic parks.

Progress in 2018 included the completion of Playa Linda, the West Wetland's second beach; the completion of the Gowan Grove project, revitalizing a nearly seven-acre area in the West Wetlands with generous support from the Gowan Company with whom we are exploring other opportunities to deepen the relationship; the groundbreaking for a new hotel to the riverfront; and the completion of the Heritage

Area's first Executive Director succession. After an extensive search requiring tremendous effort from the Board and our key partners, we wished our founding Executive Director, Charles Flynn, farewell upon his retirement, and welcomed aboard his successor, Lowell Perry, Jr. A charismatic and skilled leader, Lowell possesses significant experience in the non-profit and for-profit sectors which he deployed to establish positive relationships in the Yuma community and to devise a near- and longer-term vision for the corporation's future. Lowell led the establishment of our Hispanic Advisory Council and our newest event, "Christmas on the Colorado", to better connect the Yuma community to our work. Supported by the City of Yuma, we also honored Charles Flynn's remarkable ability to create and sustain connections over his sixteen-year career by dedicating the "Charles Flynn Riverfront Trail" to link the East Wetlands to the West Wetlands.

2018 shows that our strong connections among the Yuma community empower us to create change that is beneficial to our region. We look forward to working together for our mutual success.

Sincerely,

Brian Golding, Sr.

Brian Golding, Sr.
Chair, Yuma Crossing
National Heritage Area



West Wetlands Hummingbird Garden in bloom



Biking through Gateway Park



Charles Flynn Riverfront Trail Dedication



Restoring, Preserving, Maintaining, and Promoting Yuma's History

The warm welcome I have received has made my transition as the new Executive Director of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA) quite smooth. Gaining a better understanding of the nuances of the organization, while developing, cultivating, and stewarding relationships, has been a blast! Many thanks to current stakeholders, as well as the new friends I have made for your insight and support. All of the above has stimulated a fresh vision for the future and a plan to move forward in 2019 is emerging.

The Charles Flynn "boot-camp" and board mentoring exercise was an excellent way to take in the broad scope of YCNHA key partnerships, including:

- the Quechan Nation
- the agricultural community
- the City of Yuma (COY)
- the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, Arizona State Parks & Trails, National Park Service, and the Bureau of Reclamation

KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND RESPONSE

- *More people need to know about the Yuma Crossing*

National Heritage Area's value to the community. Intentional branding including a new logo, fresh messaging, materials, website update, logo-wear, a quarterly newsletter, as well as increased social media presence.

- *Grow organizational capacity.* Maintaining the status quo won't lead to a sustainable organization. Better defining who we are and communicating a clearer endgame mission and vision will.
- *Diversity and inclusion is important.* We are engaging the Hispanic community with the guidance of a Hispanic Advisory Council, creating Spanish translation versions of materials, as well as expanding outreach to Yuma's African-American population.

PRIORITIES INCLUDE

- *Invest in our assets.* We manage two state historic parks, maintain and manage the East Wetlands, as well partner with the COY to develop and preserve Yuma's riverfront parks. We must protect these historic treasures, particularly the Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Park. Both parks need to be more destination rather than drive-through attractions. Restoration and preservation of these parks is a critical first step. Arizona State Parks & Trails must invest significantly. Enhance



visitor experience with more interactive exhibits that tell stories in a more entertaining way through the latest in audio and visual technology. A key to success is bringing parts of the June 2015 Master Plan to life after nearly four years.

- *Finish the West Wetlands & make East Wetlands more accessible.*
- *Continue to work with the City of Yuma* on projects consistent with vision of the YCNHA such as the "Multiversity" project.
- *Quechan projects.* Upgrading Fort Yuma, as well as finishing the recently cleared bank line opposite Gateway Park.

On behalf of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, I encourage you to participate in this endeavor through an investment of time, talent, and/or treasure. Are you with us?

Sincerely,

Lowell Perry, Jr.
Executive Director, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area



Yuma West Wetlands Outdoor Environmental Classroom



YUMA WEST WETLANDS

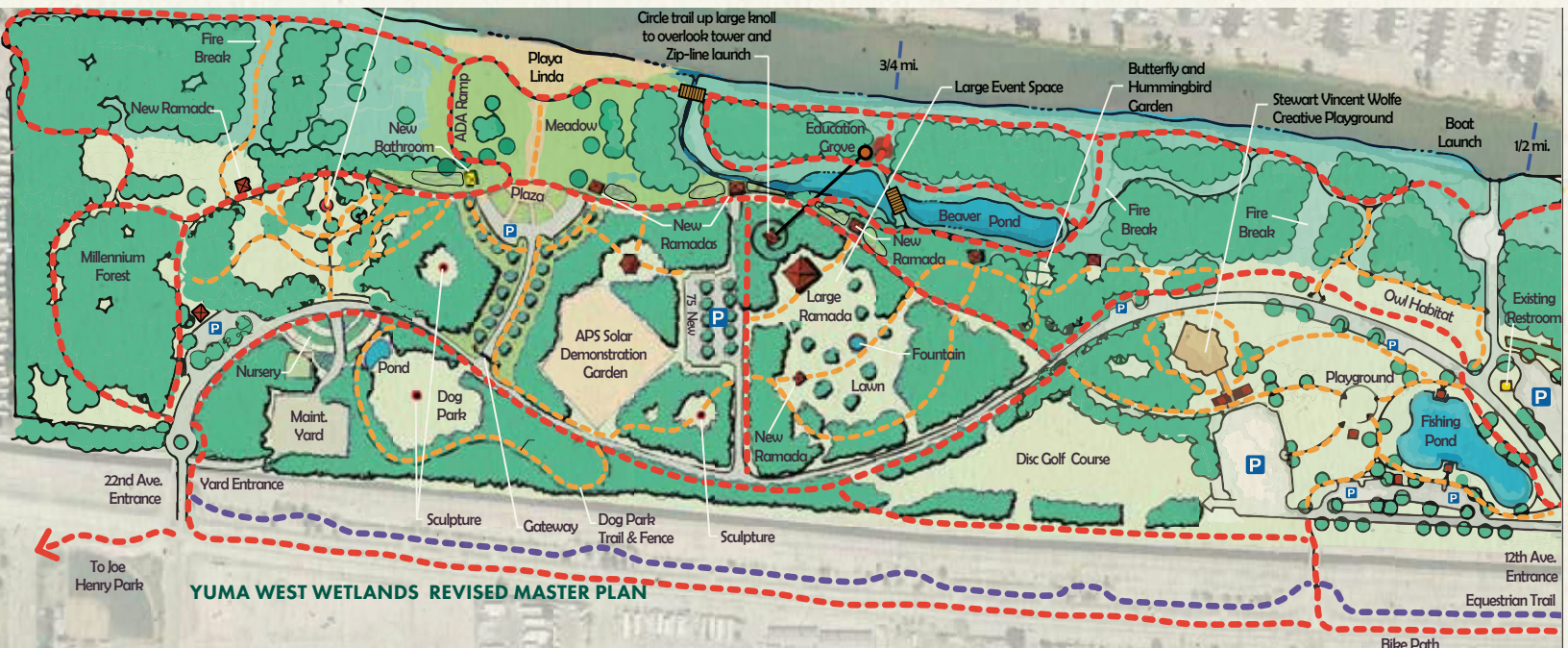
Since 2000, the Heritage Area has led the effort to design, fund, and build large sections of this 110-acre riverfront park. The ongoing transformation of what was a former city landfill into the most popular park in the City of Yuma (COY), has been astounding. The first phases of park construction focused on the “Upper Bench” facilities such as roadways, a fishing pond, two playgrounds, picnic ramadas, a hummingbird garden, and lighted multi-use pathways. In recent years, the focus has shifted to developing the “Lower Bench” of the park.

In 2017, the Heritage Area worked with the City of Yuma to revise the park master plan to better meet the needs of the community and make it more affordable to complete. Since then, the Heritage Area has worked collaboratively with the City’s Parks and Recreation department to secure over \$500,000 in grant funding to develop the “Lower Bench” including construction of a second beach called Playa Linda, trails and trailhead parking, an outdoor environmental classroom, and

restoration of over 36 acres of bank line and riparian habitat.

One of our biggest successes at the park this year came from one of Yuma’s largest employers, Gowan Company. Gowan Company was seeking to give back to the community via a large volunteer project. Due to our recent efforts in developing the West Wetlands, we had a perfect project for them. Gowan Company provided funding and over 500 employee volunteers who came from around the world, to develop trails, and plant over 700 trees and shrubs in a 7-acre section of the “Lower Bench”, now dedicated as the “Gowan Grove”.

Even though a tremendous amount of progress has been made over the past two years, much work still needs to be done to finish the park completely. The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area continues to work together with the City of Yuma to find grant funding sources and other investment needed to complete this park.





1



2



5



3

1 500+ Volunteers from Gowan Company assist in trail development and planting a 7-acre section of the Lower Bench 2 New signage for the Gowan Grove development 3 Over 700 trees and shrubs were planted in Gowan Grove 4 Invasive vegetation clearing at West Wetlands 5 New riverfront trails open up the riverfront to residents and visitors alike.



4



YUMA EAST WETLANDS

The Yuma East Wetlands is considered a model for wetlands restoration in the desert Southwest and is led by a partnership between the Heritage Area, Quechan Indian Tribe, City of Yuma, and Arizona Game and Fish Department. Restoration activities were initiated in 2004 and nearly 400 acres have been transformed from a trash dump filled with hobo camps into a mosaic of marsh, mesquite, cottonwood, and willows which provide habitat for an array of wildlife species. A few of the most notable species discovered since the East Wetlands was created include the endangered Ridgway's Rail (Yuma Clapper Rail), and the presence and successful breeding of the endangered Yellow-Billed Cuckoo.

Ongoing maintenance funding for this project is provided by the Lower Colorado Multi-Species Conservation Program, Heritage Area, City of Yuma, and Quechan. Since 2016, the Heritage Area has successfully taken on management and maintenance activities with in-house staff and is continuing to expand volunteer and educational opportunities. An additional 550 lineal feet of bank line wetland restoration was completed in 2018 with Bureau of Reclamation grant funding.

In January 2018, the Heritage Area successfully hosted the 33rd Annual International Conference on Urban Waterfront Planning, Development and Culture which allowed us to showcase the East Wetlands and all of Yuma's riverfront that we've worked on so diligently for the past 20 years.



1

- 1 The Yuma East Wetlands restoration provides nearly 400 acres of wildlife habitat
- 2 A nest of endangered Yellow-Billed Cuckoos
- 3 550 lineal feet of the East Wetlands North Bank was restored



2



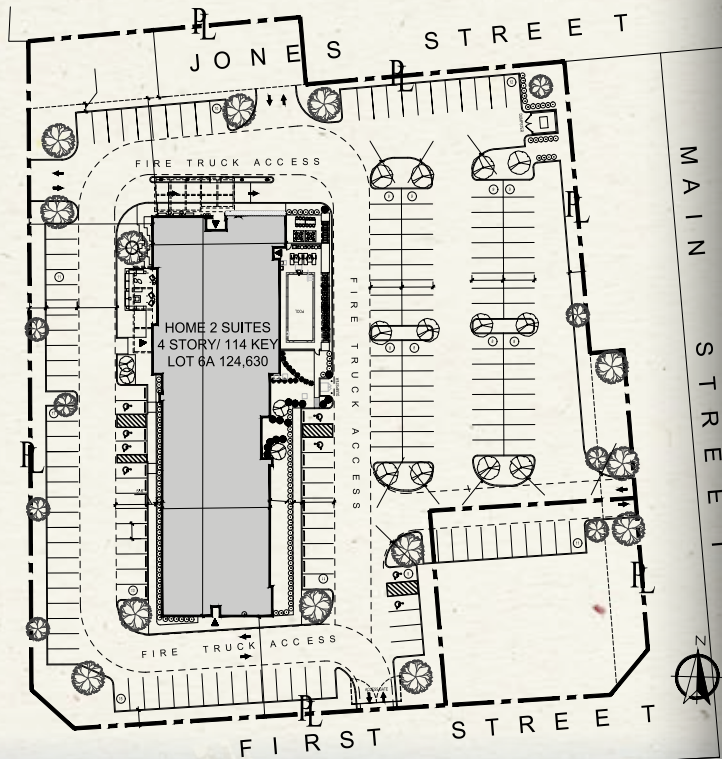
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Before



After

MADISON AVENUE



PROMOTING PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN DOWNTOWN YUMA

Continuing our partnership with the City of Yuma, the Heritage Area persists in advancing redevelopment projects in historic downtown Yuma. This year, the focus was mainly on two projects.

First, construction is under way for the new Home2 Suites 114-room extended-stay hotel in downtown Yuma. This hotel is an extension of the Pivot Point Conference Center and Hilton Garden Inn complex and will provide the additional rooms needed to increase recreational and business conference business in Yuma.

The second project is a longer-term endeavor in which the Heritage Area has been working with the City of Yuma over the past six years to plan for the redevelopment of 60+ acres of former railyards in downtown Yuma which have remained vacant for the past 70 years. This year, the Heritage Area completed the management of the City's second EPA Brownfields environmental assessment grant to perform voluntary environmental assessments in collaboration with private property owners. Additionally, the Heritage Area secured a corporate grant to assist in the effort to advance the concept of a "Multiversity" campus in these former railyards. The "Multiversity" campus concept envisions bringing together our current institutions of higher learning to expand learning opportunities for area students, thus filling a community need to offer expanded bachelor degree programs to provide the workforce needed to attract industry to Yuma. The proposed location of the campus would be a boon to downtown Old Yuma.



Construction is underway on the new 114-room Home2 Suites hotel in downtown Yuma.



Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park

ARIZONA STATE PARKS: AN ONGOING COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERSHIP

In 2010, the Heritage Area stepped forward to save and manage two state parks located in the City of Yuma after state budget cuts threatened the closure of the parks. The Heritage Area continues to manage the Yuma Territorial Prison (YTP) and Colorado River State Historic Park (CRSHP) on behalf of the City of Yuma per the City's 15-year agreement with Arizona State Parks and Trails, signed in 2016. The Heritage Area continues dialogue with Arizona State Parks and Trails to discuss much needed investment in infrastructure restoration to preserve the two state parks for future generations.

Through excellent management and marketing, the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park has more than doubled its revenues since 2010 and has developed a long-term capital improvement

program. This year, ongoing maintenance of the park buildings and grounds was completed including xeriscape landscape and sidewalk improvements between the museum and sally port in an effort to eliminate adobe erosion and provide wider walkways.

In 2017, the Colorado River State Historic Park embraced its new name and theme of telling the past, present, and future of the Colorado River. Additional advertising and social media was implemented this year to increase park attendance and special events on the beautiful park grounds. In an effort to promote the park to local young families, the first annual Christmas on the Colorado event was implemented, attracting over 400 Yumans who created Christmas memories while enjoying Yuma's rich history.



1 Xeriscape and walkway improvements made on YTP grounds **2** Xeriscaping will help combat future adobe erosion on the sally port **3** The CRSHP grounds invite visitors to linger and learn, as well as provide an unforgettable event venue **4** Abraham Lincoln makes an appearance at Civil War Days, held in January at the CRSHP





PARTNERING WITH THE QUECHAN NATION

The Quechan Nation is one of the Heritage Area's key partners with whom we have collaborated on several projects including the Yuma East Wetlands and Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge. This year, a number of projects within the Quechan Nation were initiated which are located within the Yuma Crossing National Historic Landmark.

First, at the request of the Quechan Tribal Council and Cultural Committee, the Heritage Area contracted with a historical architect to perform a conditions assessment report of historic Fort Yuma. The report documents existing conditions, serves as a basis for proposing physical changes, and provides information necessary for making appropriate decisions on the restoration and preservation of the fort. Seeking funding to stabilize key buildings needs to be a priority to preserve the buildings for future private investment.

Second, the Heritage Area secured a Sacred Places grant from the National Park Service to provide technical assistance for the St. Thomas Indian Mission to assess needed upgrades and repairs to preserve and enhance this historic church.

Finally, the Quechan began implementation of their Riverfront Park Master Plan by clearing invasive species within 12 acres along the river across from Gateway Park. The Heritage Area provided support by using in-house staff to complete herbicide treatments for suppression of invasive species. Advancing this project will be a major focus for both the Heritage Area and Quechan Nation in the upcoming years.

1 Proposed plan for the restoration of historic Fort Yuma **2** St. Thomas Indian Mission
3 Embarking on their Riverfront Park Master Plan, the Quechan Tribe has cleared the banks to make way for new development



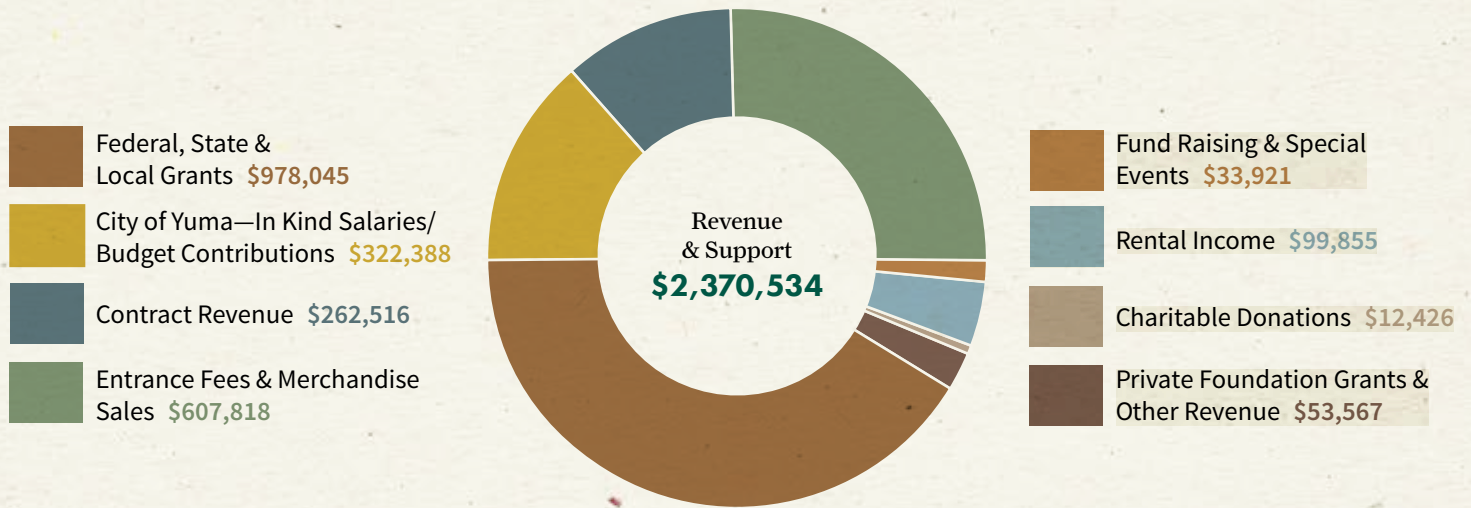
3 Before

After

YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the Fiscal Period Ended September 30, 2018

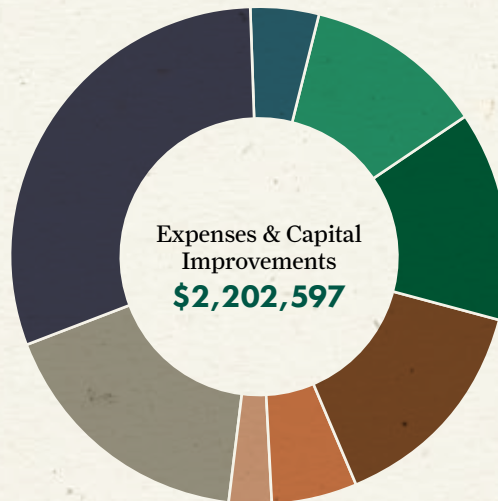


State Historic Parks (YTP/CR)

- Operations & Maintenance \$668,563
- Exhibit Installation & Repairs \$99,483

Wetlands Restoration

- Yuma East Wetlands Project Administration, Operations & Maintenance, Permitting \$257,496
- Yuma West Wetlands Restoration Project \$294,416



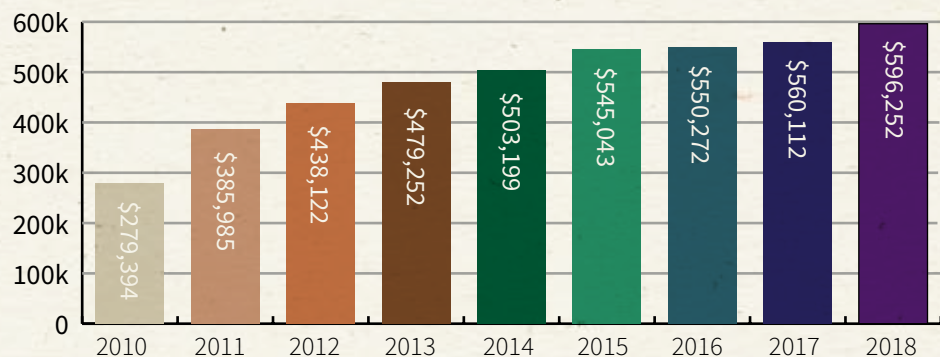
Administration & Operations

- City of Yuma — In Kind Expenses (Salaries, Heritage Area Development support, Rent) \$322,388
- Heritage Programming & Art Center Performances, Educational Conferences \$118,350
- Historic City Hall/Madison Avenue Properties/Pivot Point Plaza \$63,680
- General & Administrative \$374,841

Excess (Deficit) of Revenue Over Expenses | **\$167,938**

Yuma Territorial Prison Annual Revenue Comparison 2010-2018 (Admissions/Merchandise)

YTP revenues have grown over 200% in the last 8 years





SPECIAL THANKS

OUR DEDICATED STAFF

Lowell Perry, Executive Director

Charles Flynn, Executive Director
(retired)

Rebecca Westhoff, Director of
Operations & Finance

Mike Guertin, Territorial Prison
Manager

Tammy Snook, Colorado River
State Historic Park Manager

Vianey Avila, Environmental Program
Coordinator

Cathy Douglas, Management Analyst

Ina Hall, Accounting Specialist

Jackie Filatoff, Accounting Specialist

Tina Clark, Curator and Historian

Teri Ingram, Events Specialist

Bobette Bauermann, Senior Planner

Sarah Halligan, Communications
Specialist

Maria Famanias, Custodian

Jesus Lopez, Custodian

*Yuma Territorial Prison
Guest Services Representatives:*

Martin Trujillo

Mario Ochoa

Daniella Hammond

Lucinda Duwyenie

Hector Figueroa, Jr.

Yuma East Wetlands Project Field Staff:

Jorge A. Prado

Pio Fernandez

YCNHA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Golding, Sr., Chairperson,
Quechan Nation

Bruce A. Gwynn, Vice-Chairperson,
Yuma Community Food Bank

Tom Rushin, Secretary/Treasurer,
Retired, Yuma School District #1

Julie Engel, Greater Yuma EDC

Yanna Kruse, Arizona Historical
Society

Chris Wheeler, Prison Hill
Brewing Company

Shelley Mellon, RL Jones Insurance &
MVD Services

Douglas Nicholls, Mayor, City of
Yuma

Lisa Otondo, Senator, 4th District
Arizona

Lynne Pancrazi, Yuma County
Supervisor

Brent Range, Superintendent, Organ
Pipe Cactus National Monument

John McDonald, Retired, Bureau of
Land Management

Emilia Cortez, Girl Scouts of
Southern Arizona



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