

---

# A New Era of Partnership with Arizona State Parks

---





## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

2016 marks my fifth and final year as chairman of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, following in the footsteps of past chairs Steve Bell, Gary Munk, and Patricia Ware, who respectively guided Yuma's riverfront redevelopment since 2002. Aided by many partners, volunteers, and a dedicated staff, they oversaw the completion of two beautiful riverfront parks, an extensive multi-use trail system, 400 acres of restored wetlands, major private investment on the downtown riverfront and the preservation and continuing operation of Yuma's two state historic parks.

I am pleased to report that Brian Golding Sr., EDA director for the Quechan Indian Tribe, has agreed to serve as chairman, along with Bruce Gwynn as vice-chair and Ian Watkinson as secretary. I know the Board's leadership is in good hands.

We continued to see progress on many fronts in 2016. We are working closely with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to build a second beach in West Wetlands Park and complete the restoration of its riverfront. We saved three threatened historic adobe buildings along Madison Avenue and successfully returned them to private ownership. With an improving economy, we anticipate more private investment along Yuma's downtown riverfront.

2016 also marked a milestone for the Heritage Area, as the National Park Service completed

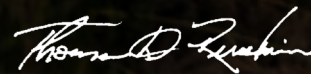
an independent evaluation of our work since 2000, and determined that we have met and exceeded our original objectives, and recommended our continued reauthorization to Congress.

Our biggest success this year was securing a long-term agreement between the City of Yuma and Arizona State Parks, which will ensure local operation and management of Yuma's two state parks for 15 years. We can now more effectively plan and implement a capital improvement program to help make the parks more sustainable.

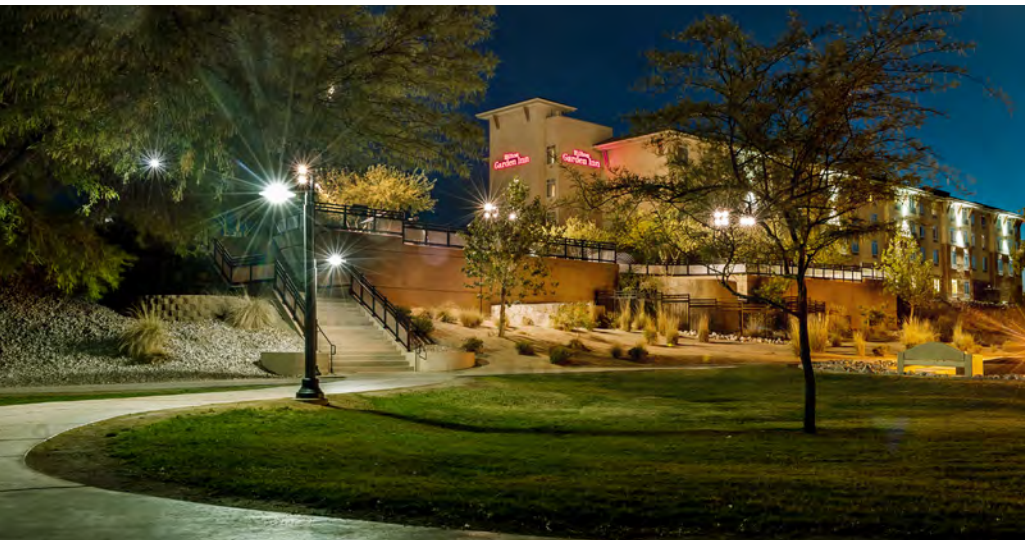
Despite so many successes at the local level, we face many challenges in 2017. Federal reimbursement policies have reduced the maintenance funding for the Yuma East Wetlands, and we will need to find new and innovative ways to supplement that funding and build a corps of volunteers. And we face uncertainty in Congress about a stable source of funding from the National Park Service.

However, we are confident that with the support of the Yuma community and our governmental and private-sector partners, the future of the Heritage area is bright.

Sincerely,



Thomas Rushin  
Chair, Yuma Crossing  
National Heritage Area



---

## WORKING TO PROMOTE PRIVATE INVESTMENT

An essential goal of the Heritage Area is to coordinate with the private sector and help facilitate private investment along Yuma's downtown riverfront. The construction of Gateway Park and other riverfront restoration projects helped pave the way for the construction of the \$30 million Hilton Garden Inn and Conference Center. Additional hotel development on the riverfront is now being considered.

In 2016, after saving and restoring historic adobes along Madison Avenue, the Heritage Area sold the three buildings to a private owner, returning them to the tax rolls.

---



## YUMA WEST WETLANDS

This 110-acre riverfront park is unique in that it is located on the site of the former City of Yuma landfill, which operated from 1910-1970. Since 2000, the Heritage Area led the effort to design, fund and build large sections of this riverfront park. In recent years, the main focus has been on clearing and restoring the bank line of the Colorado River within the park. A new western beach is currently under construction and will open to the public for the 2017 summer season.





## YUMA EAST WETLANDS

The Yuma East Wetlands is considered a model for wetlands restoration in the desert Southwest. A jungle of non-native vegetation, trash dumps and hobo camps was transformed into 400 acres of wetlands and cottonwood/willow forests, thanks to a partnership among the Heritage Area, Quechan Indian Tribe, Arizona Game and Fish, and the City of Yuma. But long-term maintenance of the area remained a concern.

The Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (MSCP) — a coalition of the federal government, southwestern states, and irrigation districts — is providing funding for basic maintenance of the habitat, but we will need to engage our community and other grant agencies to help us to sustain the level of maintenance and programming the community has come to expect.



---

## ARIZONA STATE PARKS: THE WAY FORWARD

---

In 2010, the Heritage Area took over operations of the Yuma Territorial Prison and Yuma Quartermaster Depot state historic parks in order to prevent their closure by Arizona State Parks. With the support of the Yuma community and the City of Yuma, the improvements to both parks have been dramatic.

At the Territorial Prison, revenues have doubled over six years through a creative and aggressive advertising program; a comprehensive program to address deferred maintenance was undertaken; the museum and its exhibits have been completely revamped; and, most importantly, there is now a renewed sense of community pride and “ownership” at this iconic site.

The Quartermaster Depot features stories of Colorado River history but also through a joint venture with Yuma Visitors Bureau serves as Yuma’s Visitor Information Center. The Quartermaster Depot has also become a

community gathering place for weddings, special events, farmers markets, concerts, and conferences.

Since telling the story of the past, present and future of the Colorado River is truly a theme of national significance, Senator John McCain has asked the National Park Service to assess whether the Quartermaster Depot might be eligible for designation as a national park. The results of that assessment will be complete in 2017.

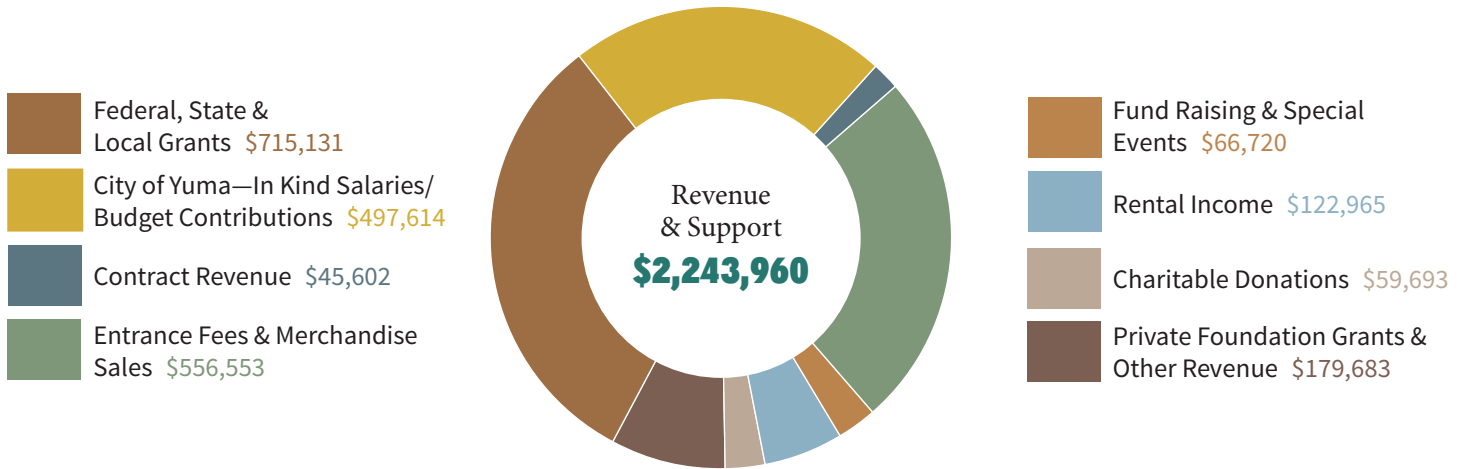
Finally, and most importantly, the City of Yuma and Arizona State Parks signed an agreement on December 16, 2016 which will ensure local management of Yuma’s state parks for the next 15 years. This agreement cements the local partnership with state parks and will permit and encourage more productive long-term planning and capital investment. This long-awaited agreement is a genuine tribute to Yuma’s perseverance and commitment to community.



YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

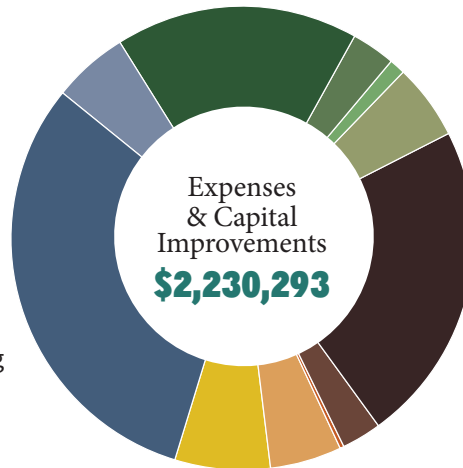
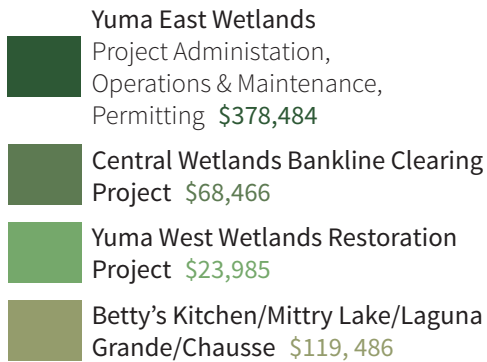
For the Fiscal Period Ended September 30, 2016



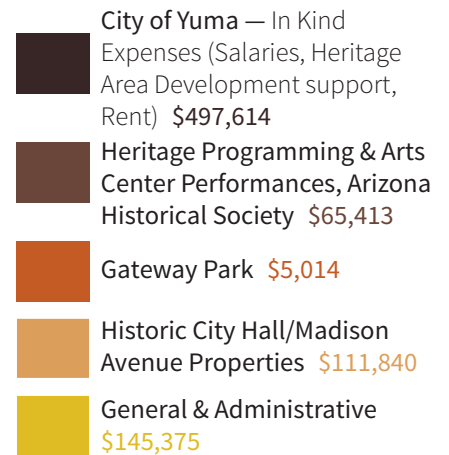
State Historic Parks (YTP/QMD)



Wetlands Restoration

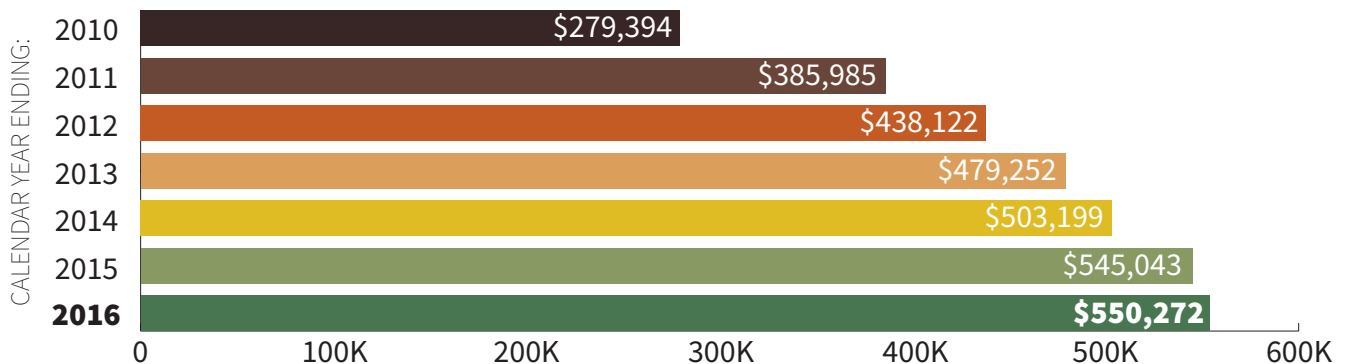


Administration & Operations



Excess (Deficit) of Revenue over Expenses: \$13,667

Yuma Territorial Prison: Annual Revenue Comparisons (Admissions/Merchandise)





## A SPECIAL THANKS

### OUR DEDICATED STAFF

Charles Flynn,  
Executive Director

Rebecca Fox, Director of  
Operations and Finance

Tina Clark, Curator and  
Historian

Mike Guertin, Yuma  
Territorial Prison  
Manager

Cathy Douglas,  
Administrative  
Specialist and Grants  
Manager

Tammy Snook,  
Interpretive Park  
Ranger

Vianey Avila,  
Environmental  
Program Coordinator

Teri Ingram, Events  
Specialist

Bobette Bauermann,  
Senior Planner

Suzy Abril, Bookkeeper

Valerie Molina,  
Administrative/Finance  
Assistant

Yuma Territorial  
Prison Guest Services  
Representatives:  
Mario Ochoa  
Martin Trujillo  
Lauryn Trujillo  
Daniella Ramos  
Lucinda Duwyenie

Maria Famanias,  
Custodian

Jesse Lopez, Custodian

**BOARD OF THE  
YUMA CROSSING  
NATIONAL  
HERITAGE AREA  
CORPORATION**

Thomas D. Rushin,  
Chair

Bruce Gwynn, Vice  
Chair

Ian Watkinson,  
Secretary/Treasurer

Brent Range,  
Superintendent,  
Organ Pipe National  
Monument (nonvoting)

Douglas J. Nicholls,  
Mayor, City of Yuma

Julie Engel, Director,  
GYEDC

Brian Golding, Sr.,  
EDA Director, Quechan  
Indian Tribe

Lynn Pancrazi, Arizona  
State Senator

Lenore Lorona  
Stuart, Yuma County  
Supervisor

Debbie Townsend,  
Farmer

Shelley Mellon, Owner,  
R. L. Jones Insurance  
Services, Inc.



[YumaHeritage.com](http://YumaHeritage.com)

180 W. 1st Street, Suite E  
Yuma, Arizona 85364  
928.373.5198