



Maricopa County
Parks & Recreation Department

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August 17, 2008

Mr. Bruce Ellis
Bureau of Reclamation - Phoenix Area Office, PXAO-1500
8160 W Thunderbird Road
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001

Subject: Public Response to Draft Environmental Assessment - Proposed Construction and Operation of the Scorpion Bay Marina and Yacht Club

Dear Mr. Ellis:

Maricopa County appreciates the opportunity to submit comments concerning the Draft Environmental Assessment - Proposed Construction and Operation of the Scorpion Bay Marina and Yacht Club. As the manager of Lake Pleasant Regional Park as well as other regional parks throughout Maricopa County, the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department mission statement is "to provide recreational and educational opportunities while protecting park resources for residents and visitors so they can enjoy a safe and meaningful outdoor experience."

Past studies (the 1984 Bureau of Reclamation Plan 6 Environmental Impact Study; the 1997 Bureau of Reclamation Environmental Assessment) have determined that there is No Significant Impact regarding environmental impact. The following are some of the steps that will be taken to ensure that there will be no significant impact from the proposed marina: construction noise during the excavation process will be mitigated through limiting construction to daylight hours; dust control measures will be in place and enforced; and silt barriers will be placed around the entire work area when construction activities are conducted "in the wet". There were no cultural resources identified, and if identified, construction will stop and BOR will be notified. Only natural, desert landscape will be used, supported by a Native Plant Inventory and Salvage Plan; desert varnish will be used on all cuts; the entire facility will use existing/natural terrain and painted to blend in with existing structures to have minimal adverse effect on the aesthetic beauty of Lake Pleasant.

3-1

Environmental concerns was one of Parks' selection criteria used for Developer selection, who was the recipient of the "2001 Marina of the Year" award given by "Marina Dock Age", a professional magazine dedicated to marina and boatyard management for environmental leadership. Parks' staff review of the planning and permitting process continues to demonstrate that the Developer meets or exceeds environmental safeguards that are in place through existing policies and regulations such as Air Pollution Control Regulations; a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan; compliance with the Clean Vessel Act; use of effluent water for irrigation; use of desert landscaping; and development of a Native Plant Inventory and Salvage Plan.

3-2

Increased use of Lake Pleasant is imminent. Boating safety is paramount. There is a full-time Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Lake Patrol Unit, who assisted by the U.S. Coast Guard, Arizona Game and Fish Department and Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department in monitoring the lake for unsafe acts.

3-3

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August 17, 2006

Subject: Public Response to Draft Environmental Assessment – Proposed Construction and Operation of the Scorpion Bay Marina and Yacht Club

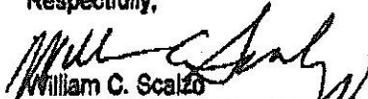
Page 2 of 2

There was concern expressed in a recent editorial pertaining to the new Marina complex regarding the number of boats/watercraft out on the lake at one time. At full build-out, there will be a maximum of 2,221 boats moored and stored at the two (2) marinas; statistics bear that only a certain percentage of watercraft will normally be out on the lake at any given time (10-20%)(percentage obtained from Tonto National Forest and Bureau of Reclamation Phoenix Office) – up to an estimated 444 additional boats based upon projected/actual wet slips between the two (2) Lake Pleasant marinas; weekend/major holidays will be your busiest period; physical parking of vehicles using the public launch ramps will be limited and aggressively monitored. Use of the lake and the number of watercraft on the lake at any given time will continue to be dictated by the amount of parking space that is available along, or near, the shore, for visitors hauling watercraft. During times when demand exceeds available parking space, recreationists will be turned away. In the recent history of Lake Pleasant, the parking was closed by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) Lake and Trail Patrol only one (1) time – over Memorial Day Weekend, 2006. To reiterate, the ramps were closed due to lack of parking, not boating safety issues. MCSO has and will continue to retain the authority to close down the public boat ramps when vehicular parking or quantity of watercraft on the lake during a period of time creates a safety concern. MCSO and other agencies will continue to patrol the lake for unsafe boating practices. To further establish guidelines for managing the number of watercraft that Lake Pleasant can support, Maricopa County Parks plans to conduct a study, prior to Marina build-out, of which the results will assist in the management of recreational activities at Lake Pleasant.

3-3

With the building of the New Waddell Dam and partial breaching of the old dam in 1992, the majority of the recreational facilities at Lake Pleasant were submerged due to the increased height of the new dam. A commitment was made in 1984 and again in 1997 by the Secretary of the Interior/Bureau of Land Management to support replacement of the submerged facilities. Surveys, presentations and public meetings held as part of the Park's Master Recreation Plan development process, in addition to informal surveys, indicate a need for the marina-related facilities and the services that would be provided by this project. Visitation to Lake Pleasant has increased approximately three percent (3%) in each of the last two (2) years. These reasons alone, in addition to replacement of the previous marina and public demand drive development of the new Marina complex. All studies to date support a determination of No Significant Impact. The only real opposition has come from the existing marina due to increased competition which the validity of their claims is being heard in the court systems. Maricopa County has done its due diligence in being a good steward of the lands entrusted to us. It is now time to move forward; approve the Draft Environmental Assessment – Proposed Construction and Operation of the Scorpion Bay Marina and Yacht Club; and let the permitting and construction process begin?

Respectfully,



William C. Scalzo

Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department

H-23

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER NO. 3
MARICOPA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

- 3-1. Your comment is noted. If not already mentioned, these steps have been included in the EA where appropriate.
- 3-2. Your comment is noted.
- 3-3. Your comments are noted.