



Palo Verde Regional Park Master Plan

Frequently Asked Questions

1) When was this area identified/designated as the site for a future Regional Park?

The area was identified as a location for a future Regional Park in the Pinal County Open Space and Trails Master Plan (OS&T Plan), which was adopted by the Pinal County Board of Supervisors in October 2007. This was one of seven (7) locations identified as future Regional Parks. Multiple public meetings for the OS&T Master Plan occurred from (June 2006) to (October 2006) with the final public meeting actually being held in the Maricopa area for citizens to review the OS&T Master Plan and provide input. The OS&T Plan was also incorporated into the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Pinal County Board of Supervisors in 2009 and updated in 2014. Additionally, The City of Maricopa General Plan 2025 designated this area as a future Regional Park. This designation continues in the current draft Maricopa General Plan “Planning Maricopa; Shaping our Community”.

[Click here to see the OS&T Master Plan](#)

2) What is meant by the term Regional Park?

As a regional government, Pinal County strives to provide high quality regional services. The OS&T Plan envisions a regional inventory of parks, trails and open space providing recreation and resource protection and preservation for Pinal County residents and visitors. Not to be confused with municipal parks that provide expansive grass multi-use areas for the public, regional parks are geared to be large, natural open space areas offering a variety of passive and active recreation opportunities. Typical recreational activities could include trails (both motorized and non-motorized), equestrian opportunities, shooting sport activities, camping facilities (both improved and unimproved), picnic areas, and wildlife viewing, just to name a few.

3) What other Regional Parks like this does Pinal County now provide its citizens?

Pinal County has plans for seven (7) future Regional Parks, but does not currently operate or manage a facility similar to this. San Tan Mountain Regional Park is one of those seven (7) identified parks. This regional park wholly resides in Pinal County (San Tan Valley area), but is owned mostly by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and operated by Maricopa County under a Cooperative Recreation Management Agreement (CRMA). This BLM/County relationship is similar to how Palo Verde Regional Park would be operated; BLM would own the land and Pinal County would operate the regional park.

4) What is a “Master Plan”?

A Master Plan is a guiding document for future land use planning. The Master Plan will define the broad concept for this Regional Park, depicting what activities will be available and where they will be located. The Master Plan is intended to be specific, but flexible and:

- Will be submitted to the Pinal County Board of Supervisors for review and approval;



- Will be reviewed and approved by the BLM, the owner of the underlying property;
- Can provide the basis for future funding decisions and possible grant applications;
- Can provide information to neighbors, residents, and visitors of the future uses within the park.

5) This land appears to be all BLM lands. What is their role in this process?

BLM is the underlying land owner for the proposed Regional Park and an important partner in this project. The development of a Master Plan is a required part of the BLM process to preserve and protect this land for future recreational opportunities.

6) How much will it cost to enter into a CRMA with BLM?

Nothing. Under a CRMA, the BLM and Pinal County would jointly manage expanded recreation opportunities with the County. There may be costs associated with the environmental clearances necessary to undertake a CRMA. These costs will be planned for in future year budgets, see question 15 for funding options.

7) Why is it important for the County to manage this area differently than how BLM is managing it now?

Pinal County residents, visitors, and policy makers identified this area as an important area for recreation, (OS&T Plan and Comprehensive Plan). The BLM manages land for multiple uses and high yield, including, but not limited to, commercial development, energy and infrastructure development, extractive industries, ranching, grazing, and recreation. At a future date, any or all of those uses could be located at this site. Undertaking a CRMA now adds local control over future recreational uses and helps to ensure the protection of the resource and recreation value now and for future generations to come.

8) Concerns have been expressed about the safety of future park users due to illegal activity in the area. Is the County aware of this and if so, what are the plans to address this issue?

Yes, the County is aware of these activities. Because of this, the Pinal County Sheriff's Office has a representative on the Working Group who is advising us and partnering on the development of the Master Plan. We anticipate that one of the recommendations in the Master Plan will be the development of a "safety plan" as part of the park implementation strategy.

9) Will there be a fee for use of or entry to this Regional Park?

Yes, we anticipate incorporating a fee structure for the developed areas (such as day use facilities, trailheads and campgrounds) of the park. The collection of fees will be used to offset the costs of operation and maintenance for the facility. Fees will be determined at a later date and must be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Fees could include day use fees, monthly and yearly passes, and fees and/or memberships for certain activities such as campgrounds and shooting sports. For example, fees at San Tan Mountain Regional Park are \$6 per car, \$2 for a "walk/ride in" and \$85 for a yearly pass.



10) Can the cost to operate and manage the regional park break even from fees or will it cost citizens county-wide more in taxes?

Yes, it is possible for the fees generated by the park to cover operating and management costs. This is dependent on how the fee structure is implemented and will be part of the future policy decisions for the Board of Supervisors.

11) When will the park open?

At this time, we do not have a definitive opening date for the park. The opening will be dependent on many variables including, but not limited to:

- The BLM approval process
- Necessary environmental clearances
- Specific site design and engineering
- Funding

Generally, based on similar projects in other Counties, the BLM process is anticipated to be 5-10 years. Again, this is only an estimate; there are many variables that could impact this timeline.

12) Will the entire park be opened at the same time?

No, it is anticipated that the park will be implemented in phases. As part of the Master Plan process, possible implementation schedules including associated costs will be evaluated. A proposed implementation schedule will be part of the final Master Plan.

13) Who will operate the park?

Pinal County would be the primary operator of the park. Pinal County may have agreements and/or partnerships for specific site operations within the park. As an example a camping facility or shooting facility may be operated by a third party.

14) How much will it cost to develop the park?

That is unknown at this time. This is one of the important reasons that the County is undertaking the Master Plan process. Proposed costs to develop the facility will depend on what activities and amenities are included in the final Master Plan. The approved Master Plan will identify estimated costs of development.

15) Where will the money come from to develop the park?

This park will be funded by Pinal County, but funding could include any/or all of the following:

- County General Fund
- General Obligation Bonds (for Capital Infrastructure)
- Grants
 - Indian Community 12 D Funding
 - Recreational Trail Program (Administered by Arizona State Parks)
 - OHV Grant Funding (Administered by Arizona State Parks)
- User Fees (Board of Supervisors approved Fee Schedule)



- Development Impact Fees
- Partnerships, Intergovernmental Agreements
- Volunteer Groups

16) Where will entrances to the park be located?

That is unknown at this time. Again, that is an important part of the Master Plan process. Possible entrance locations will be identified in the planning process and identified in the approved Master Plan document.

17) Will the park be fenced?

That is yet to be determined, but is a possibility. Fencing decisions will be determined by the needs of the proposed uses, topography, resource protection and other important considerations. The typical type of fencing used in these applications is a four (4) strand barbed wire (wildlife friendly).

18) What activities will be offered at the park?

Again, this is a major outcome of the Master Plan process. Public input from residents, neighbors, and user groups will help the County determine the preferred activities for this Regional Park.

19) Will this park have turf, ball fields, and similar amenities?

No, the County's vision for their Regional Park inventory is to have large, natural setting parks, similar to what is seen operated by Maricopa County (as an example, San Tan Mountain Regional Park, White Tank Mountain Regional Park and Estrella Mountain Regional Park). Typical recreational activities could include trails (both motorized and non-motorized), equestrian opportunities, shooting sport activities, camping facilities (both improved and unimproved), picnic areas and wildlife viewing, just to name a few.

20) Why should residents nearby welcome the Regional Park? What is the benefit to the adjacent communities?

There are a multitude of benefits of being close to this Regional Park, they include:

- Increased property values
- Potential economic benefits derived from visitors to the park
- Access to maintained recreation facilities nearby
- Increased management presence and resource protection
- Preservation of existing recreation activities and opportunities
- Better managed access to the area
- Increased safety, especially with regards to recreational shooting
- Volunteer opportunities