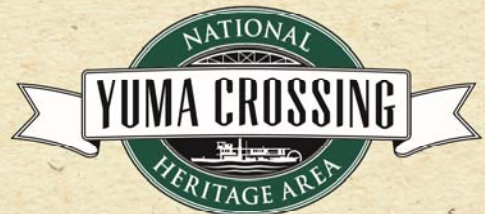

A Better Future for Yuma Through Investment in Its Past



ANNUAL REPORT | FISCAL YEAR 2018/2019



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR | BRIAN GOLDING, SR.

Reflecting upon 2019 and my third year of service as Chairman of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, I express my gratitude for the guidance and wisdom of past Chairs Steve Bell,

Gary Munk, Patricia Ware, and Tom Rushin and their collective impact upon Yuma's riverfront redevelopment since 2002. The commitment demonstrated by many partners, volunteers, and our dedicated staff has yielded 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.



In 2019, the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management bestowed its Ponderosa Pine Partnership Award upon the West Wetlands Park Development Project, indicating that our commitment to the ambitious vision for riverfront redevelopment has captured imaginations well beyond our region. Another example of our reach, USA Today readers voted the Yuma Territorial Prison as the "Best Haunted Destination" in the nation. Under the inspired direction of Lowell Perry, Jr., as our Executive Director, we are reaffirming and strengthening our relationships in the Yuma community, and are leading the effort to extend the popularity and visibility of the Heritage Area. We also remain steadfast in our commitment to care for the Yuma East Wetlands, with our staff performing maintenance and securing funding to make improvements to habitat and trails.

The connections throughout the Yuma community remain a powerful engine of change, and I am humbled to serve our community as we work together for our mutual success.

Sincerely,

Brian Golding, Sr.

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



Driving a Better Future for Yuma by Investing in Its Past



What a joy it is to serve as the Executive Director of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA). I am very excited about what the future holds for us, and for the Yuma community.

Our mission of restoring, preserving, maintaining, and promoting Yuma's history is in full gear. Yuma is poised to become a true historic destination. Our days of being a drive through gas stop between Phoenix and San Diego are numbered.

The intentionality of our branding efforts and social media presence is driving new people to our revamped websites. Organizational capacity has increased, and we welcomed new high-performing members to our team. We're actively encouraging a more diverse and inclusive culture at all levels. Locally, through new interpretive exhibits at our parks, some celebrating the untold stories of Native American, Hispanic, and African-American people. We have taken a leadership role within the Alliance of National Heritage Areas which is utilizing effective storytelling to catalyze a national conversation on race.

Our investment in Yuma's two state historic parks and the nonprofit complex called the Heritage Center continues, in addition to maintaining and managing the Yuma East Wetlands. We must preserve these historic treasures. Restoration and preservation of the Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Park remain a critical part of the equation. Arizona State Parks & Trails has committed to investing in that effort. The Master Plan for these parks was approved by them, officially

paving the way to the installation of next-level visitor enhancement upgrades using the latest in audio and visual technology.

Bringing the Master Plan to life will be a linchpin to catapulting Yuma to historic destination status. What does all of this mean? The YCNHA footprint contains two state historic parks, outdoor activities like hiking, biking, and birding, riverfront parks, historic museums, shops, a movie theater, hotels and convention center, casino, the Ft. Yuma Quechan Indian Reservation, many cool bars and restaurants including a craft brewery — all within reasonable walking distance. The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area is poised to become what we refer to as a historic Mega Park. This Mega Park will be the centerpiece of a collective impact effort leading to an economic boom for Yuma.

This will obviously require more broad-based investment to bring this vision to fruition. We began this march toward our future with the launch of the *Be Yuma's Future by Investing in Its Past* campaign. Many thanks to those who have already joined the movement. Visit YumaHeritage.com to learn how you can best lock arms and aims with us and the Yuman community to make this vision a reality.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lowell Perry, Jr." The signature is fluid and cursive.

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



Investing in Yuma and Improving the Historic Entertainment District

The Heritage Area continues to work hard to increase awareness and educate the community about who we are and our value to the community. We have been restoring, preserving, maintaining, and promoting Yuma's history and heritage for the past twenty years and have been the driving force behind much of Yuma's riverfront transformation including:

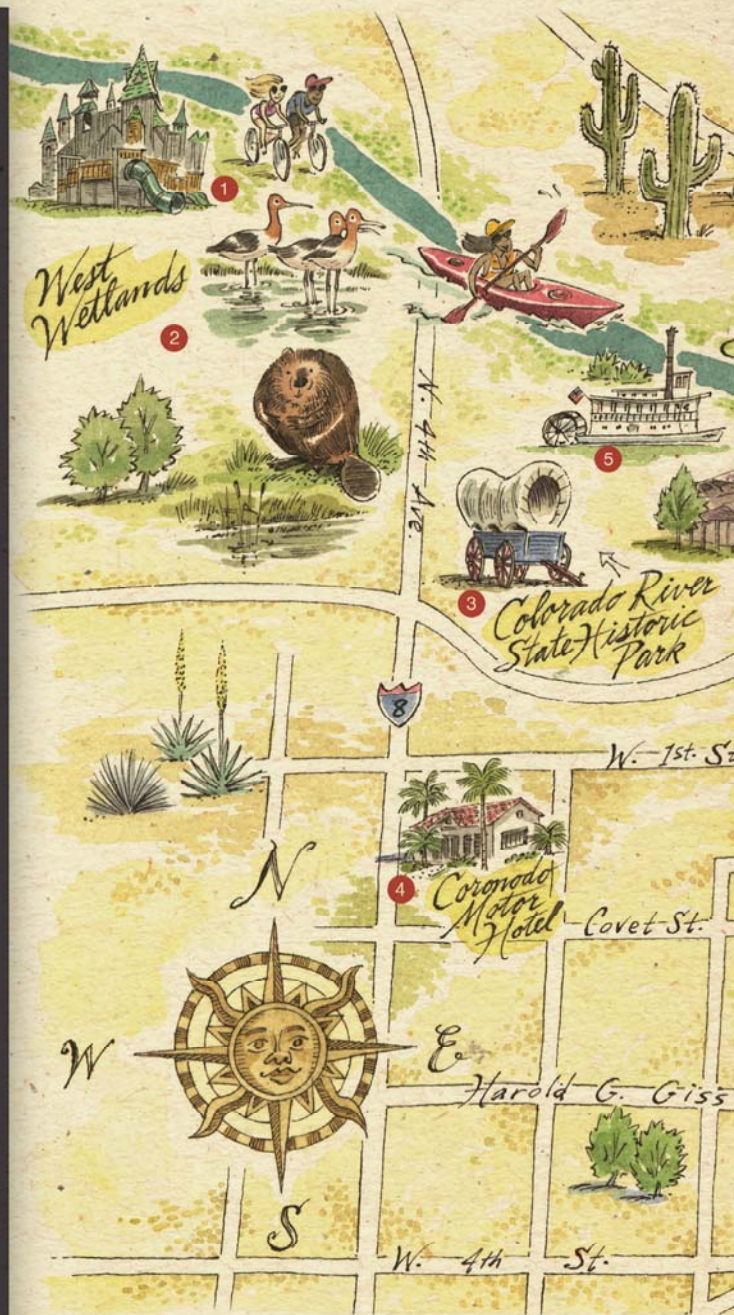
- Construction of Gateway Park, West Wetlands Park, and Yuma East Wetlands conservation area
- Advancing and promoting private investment including the Hilton Garden Inn Hotel and Pivot Point Conference Center, the John M. Roll United States Court House, and the new Home 2 Suites hotel
- Operating and managing the Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Park

We feel we are uniquely positioned to expand on these successes and lead the charge in making Yuma a more desirable historic destination.

Dynamic waterfront locations in the Desert Southwest are not easy to find, but downtown Yuma, located along the shores of the Colorado River, offers a plethora of entertainment options within a walkable footprint including:

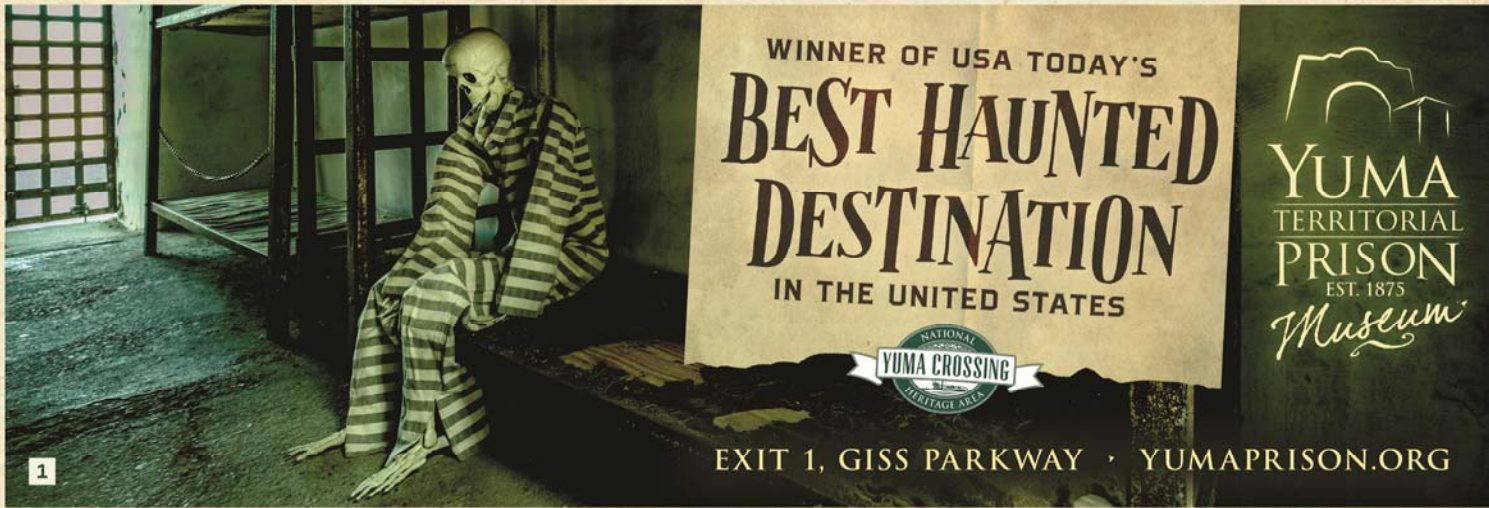
- Outdoor recreation and eco-tourism activities at several riverfront parks and conservation areas
- Two historic state parks and local museums
- Several hotels, coffee shops, restaurants and bars, retail shopping, a movie theater, and a casino, located across the river in the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation

Though Yuma already has so much to offer, it also has a tremendous opportunity to improve and expand on those attractions. The Heritage Area will be working with our partners, stakeholders, and local business owners to raise funds to improve our existing assets, develop new entertainment options, and to coordinate the creation of a consistent brand image and message that all entities can use to market Yuma's historic entertainment district.



ABOVE: YCNHA collaborated with artist Gary Hovland to create a concept map depicting what Yuma's vibrant downtown area will eventually look like for visitors in the future. **RIGHT:** The Historic North End is becoming a magnet for tourists and locals alike, with an abundance of hotels, nightlife, shopping and dining options to choose from, nestled in the epicenter of Yuman history.





1

EXIT 1, GISS PARKWAY · YUMAPRISON.ORG



2

1 Yuma Territorial Prison was named Best Haunted Destination in the nation by USA Today readers 2 The new hospital exhibit at the prison 3 View of grounds and historic buildings at Colorado River park 4 New self-guided tour app developed for Colorado River Park 5 (Opposite page) YCNHA launched an investment campaign to fund much needed repairs to our historic buildings.



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Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park and Colorado River State Historic Park

Since 2010, after state budget cuts threatened the closure of the two state parks in Yuma, the Heritage Area has operated and managed the Yuma Territorial Prison (YTP) and Colorado River State Historic Park (CRSHP) on behalf of the City of Yuma per their agreement with Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) that runs thru 2031.

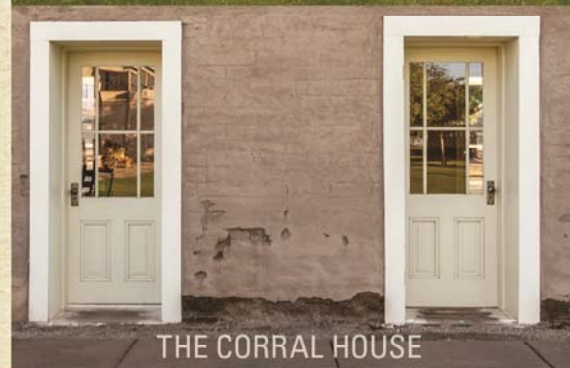
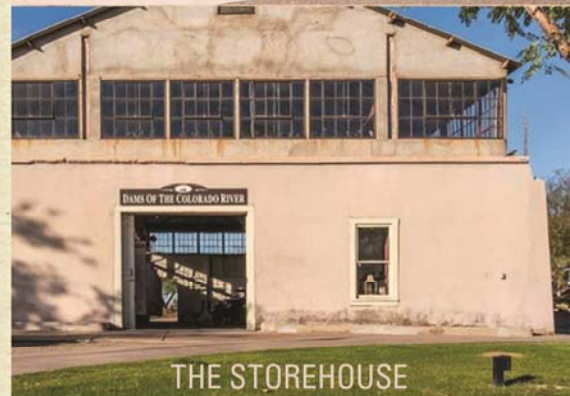
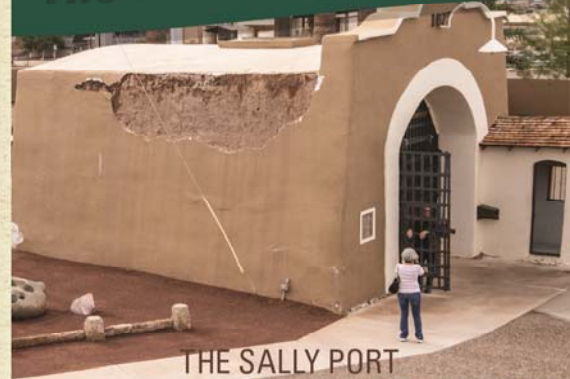
Through excellent management and marketing, the YTP has more than doubled its revenues since 2010, and is self-sustaining. The CRSHP has become a premier event venue and houses the Yuma Visitor Information Center. The Heritage Area continuously strives to enhance the visitor experience by creating new interactive park exhibits and offering tours and educational programs to portray the history of the parks. A few notable accomplishments this year included a new hospital ward exhibit at the YTP and a new self-guided tour mobile app for the CRSHP, developed in collaboration with high school students of the Southwest Technical Education District of Yuma. One very exciting achievement this year was the YTP being named the "Best Haunted Destination in the U.S." by USA Today Readers! The YTP capitalized on this designation by offering specialized ghost tours for children, adults, and paranormal ghost hunters.

These important community assets, however, are in dire need of historic adobe building and infrastructure restoration. This year, the Heritage Area has continued to work closely with ASPT and AZ legislators to solidify state funding commitments for park restoration and improvements. We are very pleased to have received long-awaited approval of the YTP and CRSHP master plan for the parks from ASPT. The Heritage Area also secured technical expertise from the National Park Service whose historic architects visited the parks and provided an evaluation of the historic park structures along with restoration and preservation recommendations.

It will take substantial funding from multiple sources, including private entities and individuals, to restore and preserve these parks. The Heritage Area will be leading the effort to ensure that these important community assets remain standing for future generations to come.

5

HELP SAVE YUMA'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS



BE YUMA'S
FUTURE
BY INVESTING IN
ITS PAST



1 Playa Linda is a popular park attraction **2** One of five new interpretive signs installed at the park this year **3** 28 acres of invasive vegetation was removed in the lower bench of the park **4 & 5** Several volunteer groups helped us plant hundreds of native trees **6** Native trees are thriving within the recently restored Gowan Grove area **7** YCNHA led the award-winning collaborative 34+ acre West Wetlands restoration project





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West Wetlands

For the past twenty years, the Heritage Area has been leading development efforts at West Wetlands Park in collaboration with the City of Yuma's Parks and Recreation department. This year saw the substantial completion of a two-year, \$600,000 habitat restoration and environmental educational enhancement project in the lower bench of the park. With grant funding provided by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management and cash match and in-kind funding provided by the City of Yuma, the Heritage Area led efforts to restore over 34 acres and 3,200 linear feet of bank line. Since this project began in late 2017, over 4,500 wetland plants and 3,500 native trees and shrubs were planted in the lower bench to create vital riparian habitat for a wide-variety of animals. Additionally, 1,500 linear feet of riverfront trails was established, an outdoor environmental classroom was created, interpretive tree and wildlife signage was installed, a tree inventory and 10-year tree stewardship plan were completed, and significant work went into the development of a series of eleven environmental education videos and accompanying brochure.

This collaborative community-wide undertaking was made possible through the combined efforts of the Heritage Area, the City of Yuma, Arizona Department of Forestry & Fire Management (DFFM), Gowan Company, and over 1,000 community volunteers, culminating in the project winning the Ponderosa Pine Partnership Award in 2019 from DFFM for exceptional urban forestry projects involving multiple organizations.

The Heritage Area will continue to work with the City on enhancing future park development. Donations of time, treasure and talent will be needed to fully complete park development and to perform ongoing maintenance at Yuma's most popular community park.



1 An endangered Yuma Ridgway's Rail at home in the wetlands **2** East Wetlands gets a new irrigation pump **3** Northern Arizona University students volunteer to plant native trees **4** A before and after look at the restoration of over 7 acres of mesquite habitat that burned in a wildfire



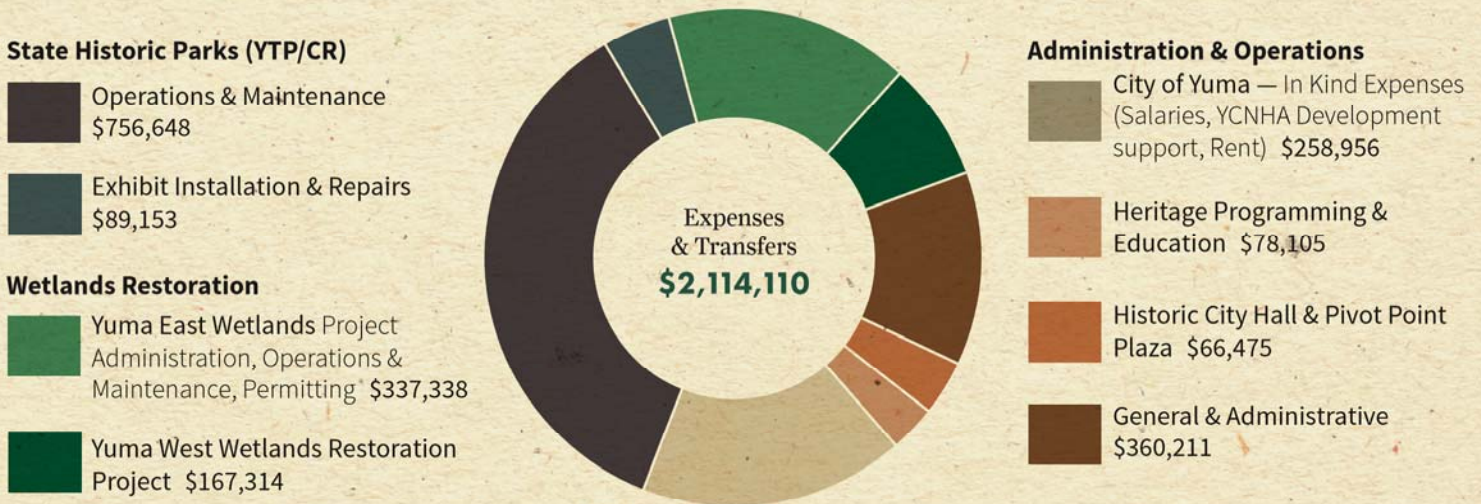
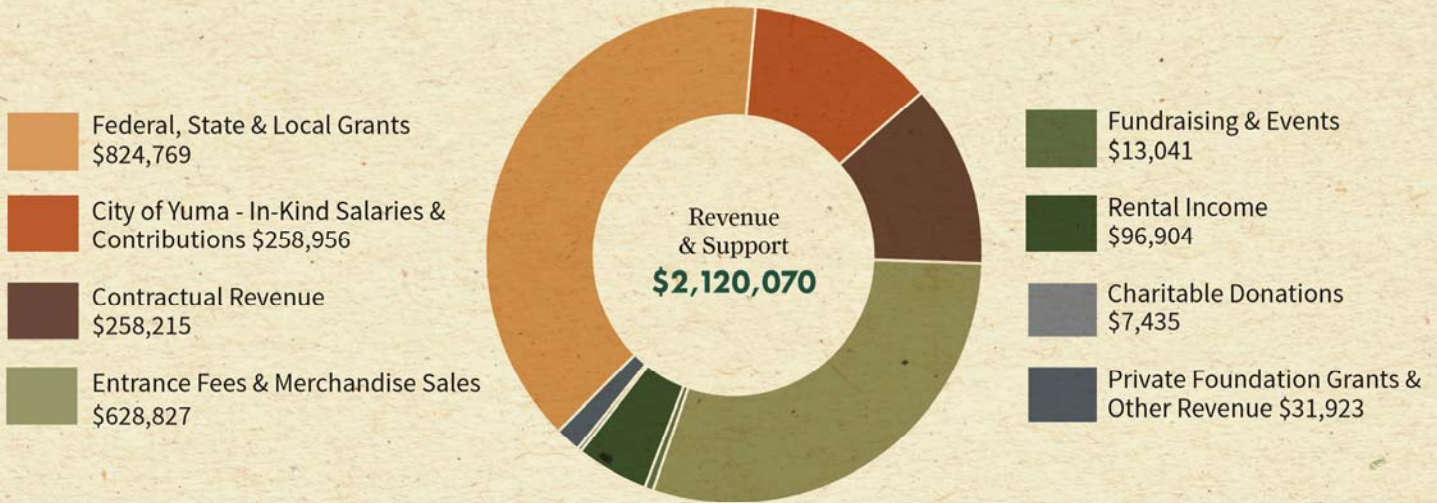
Yuma East Wetlands

The partnership and ongoing collaborative efforts of the Heritage Area, Quechan Indian Tribe, City of Yuma, and Arizona Game and Fish Department has transformed Yuma East Wetlands from what was once a trash dump filled with hobo camps and invasive vegetation into a mosaic of marsh, mesquite, cottonwood, and willows. Besides providing habitat for an array of wildlife species and a successful breeding territory for the endangered Yuma Ridgway's Rail and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yuma East Wetlands has also become a popular destination for birdwatching and eco-tourism.

For nearly three years now, the Heritage Area has been successfully operating and maintaining this nearly 400-acre Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) site with in-house staff. In 2019, the Bureau of Reclamation provided LCR MSCP annual Yuma East Wetlands maintenance funding and invested in a new irrigation pump and overhaul of an existing pump. Additional grant funding was awarded from the Bureau of Reclamation to restore over 7 acres of mesquite habitat and 1,040 linear feet of bank line that had recently burned in a wildfire; from the AZ Department of Forestry and Fire Management for 17.2 acres of invasive vegetation removal and habitat restoration; and from AZ State Parks and Trails to begin development of a nature park called Sunset View Wildlife Area.

While the Heritage Area continues to be successful in obtaining grant funding for habitat restoration, an increase in other sources of funding and volunteer involvement are required to assist with ongoing maintenance, and to continue to improve existing trails. Providing more interactive educational and wildlife watching amenities within this large conservation area will help enhance the visitor experience.

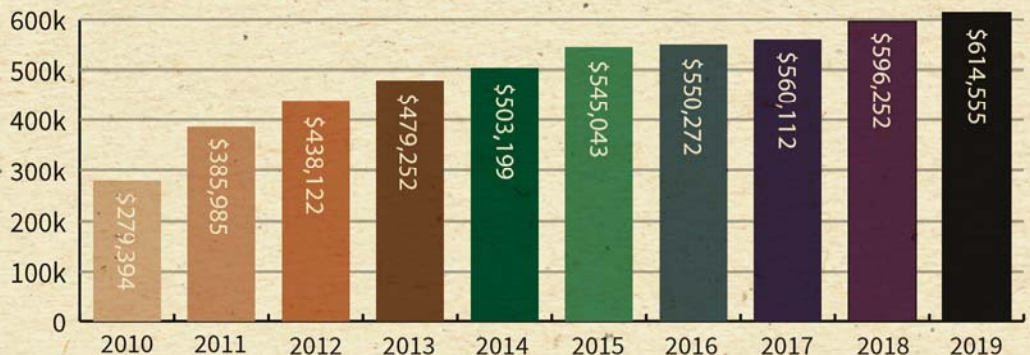
YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
 For the Fiscal Period Ended September 30, 2019



Excess (Deficit) of Revenue Over Expenses | **\$5,960**

Yuma Territorial Prison Annual Revenue Comparison 2010-2019
 (Admissions/Merchandise)

YTP revenues have grown over 220% in the last 9 years



WITH GRATITUDE

OUR DEDICATED STAFF

- Lowell Perry, *Executive Director*
- Priscilla Starr, *Accounting Manager*
- Jackie Filatoff, *Accounting Supervisor*
- Amanda Hexel, *Staff Accountant*
- Vianey Avila, *Environmental Program Coordinator*
- Cathy Douglas, *Management Analyst*
- Tina Clark, *Curator and Historian*
- Teri Ingram, *Events Specialist*
- Sarah Halligan, *Communications Specialist*
- Lisa Dickson, *Executive Assistant*
- Tammy Snook, *Colorado River State Historic Park Manager*
- Mike Guertin, *Yuma Territorial Prison Manager*
- *Yuma Territorial Prison Guest Services Representatives:*
 - Martin Trujillo
 - Mario Ochoa
 - Daniella Hammond
 - Briana Corona
 - Andrew Jimenez
- *Yuma East Wetlands Project Field Staff:*
 - Jorge Prado
 - Pio Fernandez
 - Jesus Galindo
- *Custodians*
 - Susanna Famanias
 - Jesus Lopez
- Charles Flynn, *Consultant*

YCNHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Brian Golding, Sr., *Chairperson*, Quechan Nation
- Bruce Gwynn, *Vice-Chairperson*, Yuma Community Food Bank
- Tom Rushin, *Secretary/Treasurer*, Retired, Yuma School District #1
- Julie Engel, Greater Yuma EDC
- Amber Shek, Greater Yuma EDC
- Shelley Mellon, RL Jones Insurance & MVD Services
- Chris Wheeler, Prison Hill Brewing Company
- Yanna Kruse, Arizona Historical Society
- Douglas Nicholls, Mayor, City of Yuma
- Lynne Pancrazi, Yuma County Supervisor
- Lisa Otondo, Senator, 4th District of Arizona
- Emilia Cortez, Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona

OUR GENEROUS INVESTORS

- **Shay Oil**
- **AEA Federal Credit Union**
- **Louis & Geri Didier**
- **John & Pam Osterman**
- **Kevin & Michelle Stoleson**
- John & Ev Abrams
- Laurel Adair
- Walter & Susan Bain
- Alan & Hilda Barr
- Wayne Benesch
- Colleen Brenner
- Pat & Jeanne Conner
- Delon Dalke
- Marty & Selma Dillon
- Tom & Mary Lou Edwards
- Luis & Cecilia Encinas
- Julie Engel
- Richard Files
- Anne V. Fisher
- Guenter & Marjorie Geldmacher
- Jeanne & Sherwood Glover
- Richard Gramley
- Patrick & Karen Griffin
- Jane Hamilton
- Harrison Farms
- Hilton Garden Inn Pivot Point
- Frances Horsman
- S.C. Houggard
- Russell Jones
- Bob Kammann
- Karl & Teri Koenig
- Barbara Lee
- Dalton & Nancy Lewey
- Richard Loebig
- Larry Lord
- Rusty McBride
- Karen McCabe
- Paul Moreno
- Mike Morgan
- Naomi R Mulhern
- Joann Nickel
- Edward Oller
- Doug Pancrazi
- Jeff & Jamie Penny
- Brian Phelps
- Fred & Kellner Phillips
- Prison Hill Brewing Company
- M. Angelina Ruiz
- Margaret Sheehan
- James and Renee Sheldahl
- Bob & Jill Sloncen
- Edward & Tammy Snook
- Steve & Jane Steinfeld
- Sunny Breeze Farm
- Anthony Tew
- Ken & Carol Truett
- Tom & Mara Tyree
- Mr. & Mrs. Mike Vandeveld
- Kim & John Vaughn
- Robert & Patricia Wheeler
- Wilbur Drywall Company
- Lloyd Williams
- Kathy Wong

