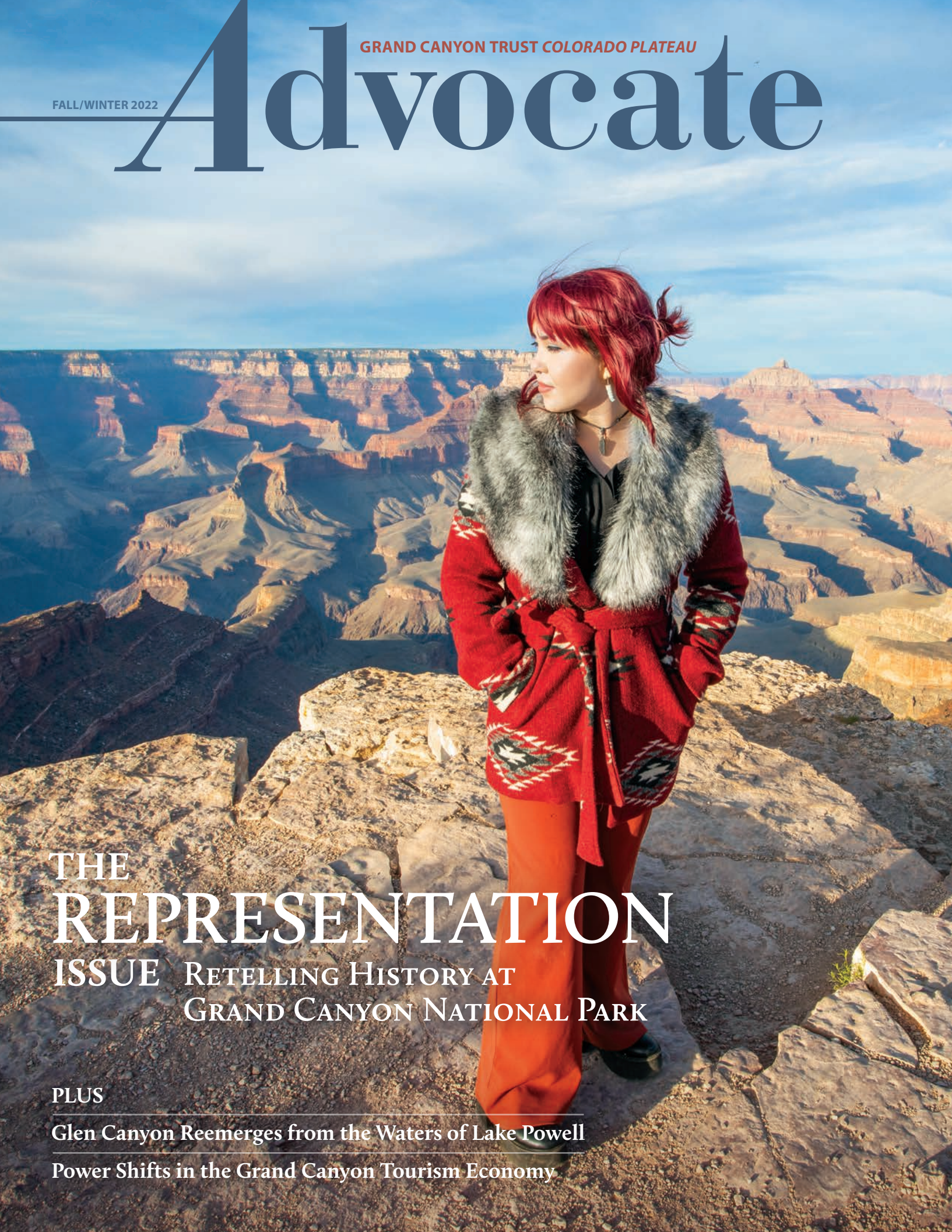
GRAND CANYON TRUST *COLORADO PLATEAU*

Advocate

FALL/WINTER 2022



THE REPRESENTATION ISSUE

Retelling History at Grand Canyon National Park

PLUS

Glen Canyon Reemerges from the Waters of Lake Powell

Power Shifts in the Grand Canyon Tourism Economy

TIM PETERSON

Letter from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ETHAN AUMACK

Writing this on a day that climate negotiations have, yet again, fallen apart—seemingly entirely—in Washington, D.C., the urgency of and need for our work has never been more painfully obvious. Whether we see conservation work through the lens of the climate crisis, the biodiversity/extinction crisis, environmental-justice imperatives, or the need to protect the places we have come to love for future generations, we surely need a model for effecting social and environmental change that works—and works for everyone.

A model that works is one that can bring about durable, broadly supported change, overcome perpetual gridlock in Washington, D.C., and withstand the whipsaw political pendulums of our times. And that requires broad, diverse, and authentic participation in and leadership from a much greater cross section of our nation than has been part of the traditional conservation movement—a movement that has, in fact, for so many years, excluded so many beyond white middle-to-upper-class citizens. Those left out and left behind have too often been disproportionately harmed by environmental policies and laws of the past century. And these are also the thought leaders whose voices and ideas we will need to win the day. It is paramount that these leaders have a seat at the head of the table as the conservation movement evolves in the face of incredible, even existential, challenges.

This "Representation Issue" of the Colorado Plateau Advocate explores some of the many ethical, moral, and strategic imperatives driving the Grand Canyon Trust and many in the environmental movement to do our part to reconfigure the proverbial table from Grand Canyon to Glen Canyon, and across the Colorado Plateau. More importantly, this issue explores how we go about this work in real time. At the center of our work has been and will continue to be supporting the rights of the Native peoples of the Colorado Plateau. We do this, and will keep learning our way toward doing this better, in community, in place, doing our utmost to listen and grow—individually and collectively.

The challenges of our time are incredible. I and we remain deeply hopeful, and entirely committed to the notion that a broad, diverse, equitable, and representative conservation movement can overcome these challenges, securing an environmentally just future for the Colorado Plateau and its people.

Sincerely,

Ethan Aumack

OUR MISSION
To safeguard the wonders of the Grand Canyon and the Colorado Plateau, while supporting the rights of its Native peoples.

ON THE COVER
Model: Cree Watahomigie
Photographer: Amy S. Martin

EDITOR'S NOTE
The views expressed by the contributors in this issue are solely their own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Grand Canyon Trust.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint sections of the Colorado Plateau Advocate for non-commercial purposes provided that nothing is altered or edited in any way and that an appropriate credit line and copyright notice are included.

Volunteer with Us

BLAKE MCCORD

There are birds to watch, fences to fix, and habitats to restore.

Lend a hand
grandcanyontrust.org/volunteer

ADVOCATE TEAM
EDITOR: Ashley Davidson
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Lisa Winters
DESIGN: Joan Carstensen
CARTOGRAPHY: Stephanie Smith
PRINTING: Lithotech

HEADQUARTERS
2601 N Fort Valley Road
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
928-774-7488

printreleaf.

contents

E. WONG, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

RAYMOND CHEE

MICHAEL QUINN, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

BOTH PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON

PLUS

rep·re·sen·ta·tion (n):
beyond checking a box

By Chelsea Griffin

I remember the moment I first felt like I was the only one in the room like me. It was 2003; I was 13 years old, and riding the school bus home in suburban West Linn, Oregon, sitting next to my best friend. Another student saw a pro-marriage-equality sticker on my guitar case and said, "Ew, are you gay? Do your parents know? Are you allowed to have sleepovers with girls? I can't believe you're gay!" All the other children stopped to stare, laugh, and make comments.

"No, I'm not gay! Anyone should be able to get married!" I responded, turning my head so she didn't see my cheeks go red. I didn't know what my sexuality was or would be then, but I knew I might not be "normal." To me, normal was defined by what I saw around me. I didn't know any LGBTQIA+ people in my city, all of my parents' friends were in heterosexual relationships, and every book I read and TV show I watched portrayed romantic love as between a

The author rowing in Upset Rapid on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park in May 2021. STUART RUCKMAN

LGBTQIA+

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex, ally (or asexual), and a plus sign to cover anyone else whose identity is not represented.

man and a woman. Every social signal I had said, "it's not normal to be gay," and so I put my head down and hoped I would fit in.

Since then, I've been the only queer person, or one of very few, at many places I've worked and lived, from past jobs in outdoor education and nonprofits, to ultimate frisbee teams I've played on and friend groups I've been part of. For a long time, I worked to assimilate to heteronormative culture and people around me in order to survive in places I worked. This meant hiding a large part of my identity and life experience and constantly having to explain myself to people. It felt like I was coming out over and over. In part this was because there was so little representation in my communities that the people around me didn't know how to think from another perspective. The conservation field is no exception, and it's not just LGBTQIA+ people who aren't adequately represented.

But what is "representation" exactly? Representation is not being the "only one" in the room, whether it's your race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or cognitive ability, or another defining facet of your identity that influences how you move through the world and how others treat you. Imagine if I'd had another person or multiple people with me on that bus willing to say that it was normal to want equal marriage rights, or who had parents in a same-sex marriage, or who were queer themselves. It might have changed my relationship with myself and my ability to trust others at a much younger age.

It can be an incredible burden to be the only one like you in a room and that's part of why increasing representation is so important—people can't be themselves unless they're allowed the space to do so. Sometimes that space comes from seeing others who are like you and represent your experiences and identity. You know the feeling I'm talking about. When you walk into a party you look for people you know or someone like you to start a conversation with. Someone who makes you comfortable. Imagine walking into a room and finding no one like you. Representation is seeing yourself in those you are proximate to. This might be because of a physical characteristic like skin color or gender identity, or a less visible part of your identity like cognitive ability or sexuality. Representation is not being the only one in the room.

In the United States some identities have been more heavily represented than others, such as white folks, heterosexual people, and able-bodied people. When we talk about the need for greater representation, we are talking about that need specifically relating to identities that have been historically left out or underrepresented in stories, in media, in decision-making, in workplaces and professions, and so on. This act of leaving certain identities out is called

Birdwatchers Needed

GRAB YOUR BINOCULARS

AND HELP US SPOT PINYON JAYS

Pinyon jays live in pinyon and juniper forests across the Colorado Plateau. The birds and the trees depend on each other. Pinyon pines provide nuts and pinyon jays help the pines spread their seeds. Both face unprecedented threats.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

to help gather information about pinyon jays. Knowing where the birds are helps us protect their habitat and advocate against clearcutting of the forests they depend on.

WILL YOU HELP?

Sign up and get trained at **grandcanyontrust.org/birdwatch**

MARIE READ

Camping along the Colorado River during a river trip. BRIAN CROCKFORD

"marginalization." For example, a 2019 study conducted by Green 2.0, an organization that collects demographic data in the environmental sector, found that among 40 of the largest green nonprofits, only 20 percent of staff and 21 percent of senior staff identified as people of color, despite the national population of people of color at that time being more than double those percentages.

But why does representation matter? Sometimes simply looking around and seeing people who represent an identity that we also have makes us feel safer to speak up, be who we are, and not just be seen, but feel seen.

I recently guided a 16-day river trip though the Grand Canyon for Grand Canyon Youth, a nonprofit that focuses on creating greater access to the rivers and canyons of the Southwest for young people. Of the six guides on the trip, I was one of four who identify as queer and one of five who identify as female or non-binary. In my 13 seasons of river guiding, nothing like this had ever happened. I should note that this group was almost entirely comprised of people who identify as white, and was not racially diverse. While there was a lot of gender diversity on the trip, there is also great privilege in being white-bodied people in industries like outdoor recreation. My ability to relate to my coworkers, offer constructive feedback, advocate for myself, and bring my full self to my work, was very high on this trip. I felt like I was able to contribute my skills and expertise in a more meaningful

way. With greater representation, people generate better and more creative ideas, and solve problems more strategically. Increasing representation helps nonprofits pursue their missions more authentically. When people see themselves represented in the staff of an organization, it makes it easier to reach out to different communities and build trusting relationships. Greater representation also increases staff retention rates and builds leadership based on empathy and reciprocity. You can imagine that, in a field like conservation, these benefits can be incredibly valuable.

At the Grand Canyon Trust, we know representation alone is not enough. Increasing representation in any space without also sharing power and access to decision-making won't create change and might actually further alienate people who experience identity-based oppression. Imagine being asked to sit on a committee or board, or join a staff, but not having your ideas and experiences heard, valued, or supported, and only being asked to join those spaces because of your identity, not your skills and expertise. This is called "tokenizing" someone. Being tokenized is extremely harmful and actually decreases your ability to build trust with someone.

Conservation, as a professional field, has dedicated itself to supporting ecological protection. At the Grand Canyon Trust our mission is "to safeguard the wonders of the Colorado Plateau, while supporting the rights of its Native peoples." That's a hard goal to accomplish when everyone working to accomplish it comes from a similar set of life experiences. The most durable strategies for protecting the Grand Canyon, adapting to climate change, and opposing destructive uranium mining are developed by the people most heavily impacted by these issues. This means the voices of those people must not only be at the table, they must be in decision-making and leadership roles. This includes Indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ people, Black and Brown people, and many more.

We believe we need greater representation of these identities—identities subjected to oppression—on our staff and in the broader conservation field. Conservation and the Colorado Plateau have their own histories of racial injustice and exclusion and, as a largely white organization, we know we have work to do. Over the past four years, we have taken important steps to formalize our longtime work to be more just and equitable, and to prioritize diversity and representation by building more inclusive spaces. We've designed a strategic Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan to support us in doing so and while we've taken strong steps, we have a long way to go and a lot of improvement to make.

It's experiences like I had on the school bus that make me want to do the work I do, and it's experiences like I had on the river that give me hope that the work will make a difference. While I've spent a lot of my professional life feeling alone in my identity, I'm not, and I'm not the only one who has experienced being "othered" either. I know that increasing representation within organizations also means increasing access to a sense of belonging for staff. My deepest hope is that this will lead beyond representation to meaningful and lasting change. I know I want to be a part of that change…do you?

Chelsea Griffin leads the Grand Canyon Trust's justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work.

JANE DERDERIAN

Ha'a Gyoh (Havasupai Gardens)

MORE THAN A NAME CHANGE

By Ophelia Watahomigie-Corliss

When you are the only one speaking a language, wearing a ribbon dress, or dancing to the drum, it's common to feel like all eyes are on you, questioning, "What is this person doing?" This causes many to stop dancing, singing, and representing in this way, even when we are alone. A number of feelings, like fear and embarrassment, can cause you to ask, "Where is everyone else?" When there seems to be no one else it becomes easy to give up, and these forms of knowledge, these ways of being and doing, become increasingly lost. Many of these issues are intergenerational, dating back to the beginning of federally mandated erasure of Native Americans.

Maybe that intergenerational trauma has already alienated your parents from tradition because trauma results in loss of knowledge and other harm. It can be one of the scariest things in your life to take that first step to learn your history, culture, or language. Who can you ask for help? Forced assimilation and manifest destiny have resulted in internal racism that becomes hard to separate from what some consider tradition. This gets even more complicated when coupled with systems of external racism that exist outside of Native communities. Without representation, one may not even feel welcome within one's own tribal community, much less outside it, and this isolation causes many young Natives to take their own lives.

When discussing representation of Natives, it's important to start the conversation at the local and regional levels. Representation and the lack thereof came into stark focus when I first traveled to Washington D.C. to lobby for my tribe, the Havasupai. The polite passengers in my shared Uber were awestruck by my recounting of the trip from my home at the bottom of the Grand Canyon to the U.S. capital. Some had even been to Grand Canyon National Park and yet had never heard of the Havasupai. This angered and saddened me all at once.

Native Americans believe that the land is alive. This is why traditional Supai communicate their intentions to the land when gathering on aboriginal territory. The land has always been represented by Natives, that is before Euro-Americans laid claim to it. Stark cultural differences continue to exist

> We teach our children to learn from their mistakes, and if we are wrong, to own up to it and make it right.

such as the land being depicted as untamed wilderness or unoccupied, resulting in its destruction to extract or dispose of radioactive and toxic materials. These beliefs are foreign to the people of this land but have been forced onto the land and its original inhabitants.

Representation, and the subsequent erasure of such for the Havasupai people, can be traced back to the failed ethical responsibility of the U.S. government immediately after the forced creation of the Havasupai Reservation in 1880. The original surveyors sent to finalize the borders of the reservation were incompetent, resulting in the boundaries being drastically and dangerously reduced to a land area of only 518 acres. The Indian agents assigned to manage and influence the Havasupai soon began a correspondence with Washington D.C. contesting the reservation's small size. These Indian agents were assigned by the government and the Havasupai were supposed to trust them even though the tribe feared being relocated or killed. These agents questioned how the Havasupai were supposed to become self-sustaining raising livestock when the designated land and water were insufficient. For decades there was no meaningful response. It wasn't until 1975 that an act of Congress returned 188,077 acres of land to the Havasupai.

This verifiable history demonstrates changes requested for Indians by non-Indians working for the federal government, who petitioned the federal government for better living conditions for the Havasupai. The Havasupai people were thus denied representation for a century in an American society that prided itself on its claim that it "represented" all of its citizens. Federal mandates to assimilate, the "times," and public attitudes all played a role. One need only do a cursory review of American history to educate oneself on this multi-layered repression of the needs, desires, and voices of Native peoples. Ignorance of this remains a choice, and you owe us

BOTH PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY RAYMOND CHEE

Looking out at Ha'a Gyoh (Havasupai Gardens) from Bright Angel Trail. LAURA PLATINI

Behind this effort is the desire for millions of visitors to know the true history that has been hidden and to show the world that any time is a good time to try to right past wrongs.

the effort of understanding our history as the land you own, the very home you live in, is located on Native land.

Fast-forward to now. The times are more welcoming to hearing the stories and understanding the needs of minority peoples. In fact, when I wrote an article for this magazine in 2019 about renaming Indian Garden—once home to Havasupai people who were forcibly removed, now a popular tourist destination along the Bright Angel Trail inside Grand Canyon National Park—it was very well received by the public. Ethical representation is not a new concept for the Havasupai, nor is this a new idea that I came up with, rather it happened to strike at the right time; the article was read, heard, and the idea was supported.

Nonetheless there has not been nearly enough representation for tribes within Grand Canyon National Park including the Havasupai, who still physically occupy land on the south

rim of the park. This is evidenced by the millions of visitors who go to the park every year without knowledge of our legacy of protecting the land. I am hopeful that times are changing for the better regarding representation, which requires that our true history become public knowledge.

It is therefore significant that Grand Canyon National Park has expressed not just interest, but an actual administrative will to change the name of Indian Garden to its traditional Havasupai name, with an accompanying English translation. To get the name changed, the park must receive approval from the U.S. Board of Geographic Names. Why bother with a change? This will rightfully correct the name to Ha'a Gyoh (Havasupai Gardens) on maps and official documents moving forward.

We teach our children to learn from their mistakes, and if we are wrong, to own up to it and make it right. This is why a name change, though it may seem small, is a significant step in our history. We were all once babies, learning from our elders to navigate our way into adulthood. It follows that at least once in our lives we've tried to make amends for some hurt we may have caused to another person. The relationship and history between the national park and the Havasupai have led up to this point. They are correcting a wrong and trying to make it right. Behind this effort is the desire for millions of visitors to know the true history that has been hidden and to show the world that any time is a good time to try to right past wrongs.

This is not a fast process, as is always the case when it comes to effecting change through large agencies and government bodies. Communities must be informed and asked for support, and the surrounding publics need to be lobbied. As we navigate the velvet ropes of politics, we must remain hopeful that our change will be heard, welcomed, accepted, implemented, and established "on paper" to guarantee it's cemented for the future.

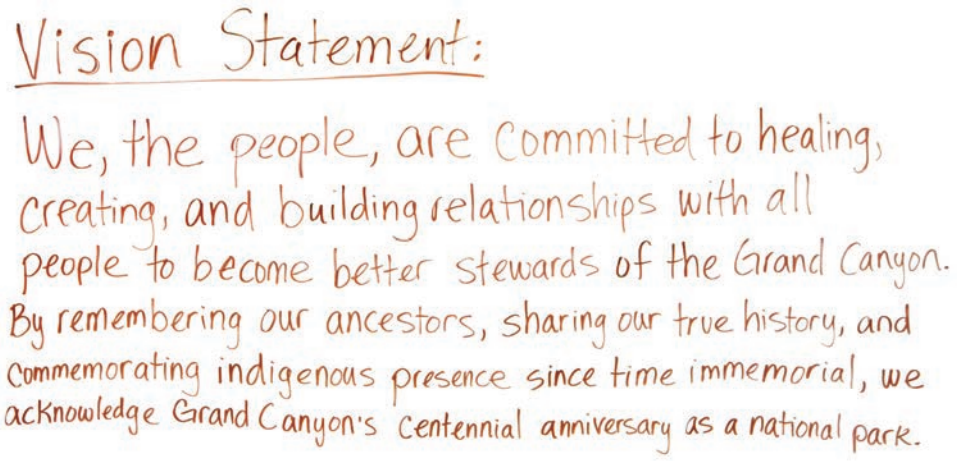
The park has already made formal requests of support to regional tribes and has the full support of the Havasupai Tribal Council. My article, "Rename Indian Garden," has garnered widespread public support including from local educators and the Geological Society of America. Through that public support network we learned about the process of changing the name on the national level. The park has agreed to make internal name changes and has submitted the official paperwork to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names. The board has in turn submitted the proposal to the Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names for comment, but currently that board has been disbanded. However, the U.S. Board of Geographic Names has already expressed interest in approving our change.

In the meantime, the park has established a small team to work on interpretive signs for Ha'a Gyoh (Havasupai Gardens). There is opportunity for not only place-name reconciliation, but also for true history to be presented through different mediums. This project is still in the beginning stages and it will take time to change in the correct manner, with support from the Havasupai community. Cultural differences on information-sharing will add complexity, but being personally involved with the display changes, I can tell you that we are starting back up now that my daughter is getting a little bit older (10 months). The common vision is to transform the visitor experience so that when visitors hike back out they understand the significance, history, and connection of the present-day Havasupai community.

Hiker at Mooney Falls, Havasupai Reservation. ED MOSS

This name change reinserts the Havasupai into your history, the history that has been taught to millions of children in the school system. History that left us out on purpose to sell the idea that the Grand Canyon was wild and needed to be tamed, that our territory was unoccupied and needed to be settled, that our land was where you should mine for uranium because no one here needs clean drinking water, that we would be fully assimilated. That history has tried to remove the Havasupai from the land and water—these life-sustaining resources we believe ourselves to be physically and forever connected to. This is more than a name change. This is for the Havasupai who died continuing to access our lands, our ancestors who held space to ensure their grandchildren's survival, who traveled to Washington D.C. and won land back. This is for those who survived into adulthood while our parents were trying to survive themselves, those finding our way back home, the resilient families who never left and kept the traditions alive, those learning tradition, and for the impact that naming and representation have on our future: Havsuw'a.

Ophelia Watahomigie-Corliss is a member of the Havasupai Tribe, an advocate, writer, mother, and former member of the Havasupai Tribal Council.



Group vision statement. JAKE HOYUNGOWA

It's Time to Reform Hiring at Grand Canyon National Park

By Amanda Podmore

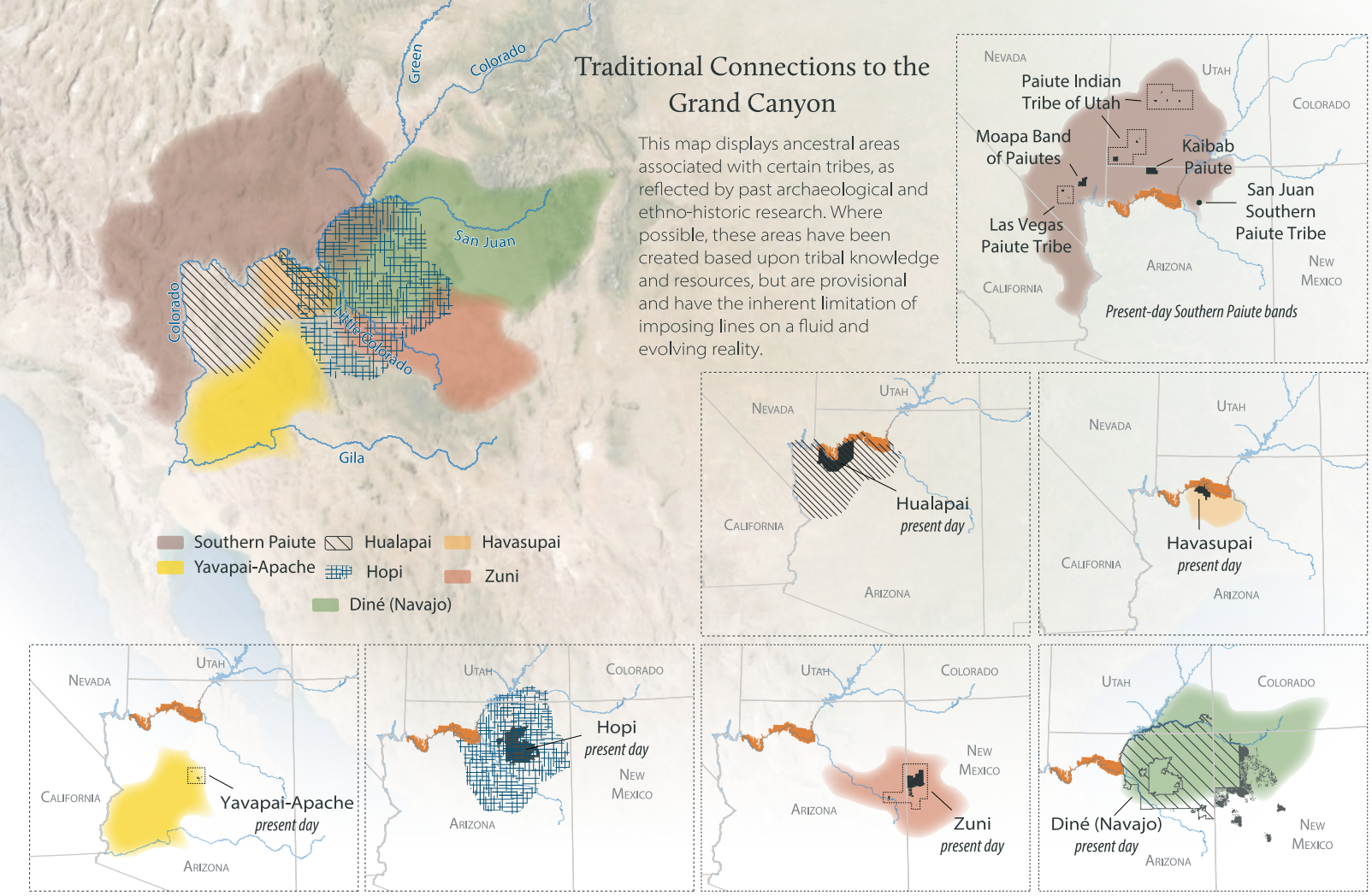
If you've ever set your sights on a job with the federal government, you know the application gauntlet can feel like some combination of a marathon and an obstacle course. Admittedly, I've never run a marathon, but I do know that the various hoops and hurdles of the federal hiring process create a very real problem across public lands on the Colorado Plateau: they disadvantage Native people from jobs managing their ancestral lands. But that could be about to change, starting at Grand Canyon National Park.

Areas like the Grand Canyon region that today are managed as federal national parks and national forests are the traditional lands of Indigenous peoples. While the original stewards of the land were displaced by genocide, pandemic warfare, and federal policy that radically shrunk traditional lands to paltry reservations and allotments of private property that were counter to Native custom, Native people are still here. Pushed off federal lands, they're still practicing their traditional lifeways, based on cultural knowledge that has been passed down since time immemorial.

> The Grand Canyon from the Havasupai perspective is the embryotic, the emergence, the origin of how we came to be. We try to take care of it, we've always wanted to take care of it, and we still feel like we do take care of it. Living at the bottom of the canyon, I feel like I hear the heartbeat of Mother Earth a lot closer than I would on higher ground. So it would seem to me that the Havasupais, in their blood and with every breath, already know how to take care of the Grand Canyon.
>
> *Ophelia Watahomigie-Corliss, Havasupai*

Modern-day research is now complementing what Native peoples have been saying and showing for millennia: they have deep local and traditional knowledge about caring for the land that benefits both people and the environment.

Despite Indigenous expertise in land stewardship, Native representation in federal jobs is still low. Native Americans and Alaska Natives, 1.1 percent of the national population, are technically more than proportionally represented in the National Park Service workforce at 2.5 percent. The percentage of park rangers who are Native comes in a little lower at 0.8 percent and Native women, in particular, are underrepresented. However, when you consider how many national parks sit on the doorsteps of tribal nations in the western United States, Native representation



in the park service workforce is disappointingly low. Currently, only about 6 percent of park service employees at Grand Canyon National Park are Native, according to one recent park estimate, a meager number when you consider that Native people make up more than 27 percent of surrounding Coconino County, Arizona. Federal jobs with agencies like the park service can be stable, well-paying career opportunities. Why then is Native representation at the Grand Canyon so low?

First of all, there are two tracks for federal employment: competitive and excepted service. The first track, which represents about half of federal jobs, requires a cumbersome online application through USAjobs.gov that ranks your skillsets and automatically sorts applicants. My husband, a former river ranger, loves to tell the story of the time he applied for the federal river ranger job he'd had the previous summer and was deemed unqualified by the automated system.

For Native applicants, this process can be all the more challenging. First of all, applying for a federal job requires a physical address, something that many people living on reservations lack. Next, using the online platform requires reliable internet access, another challenge in rural areas with limited electricity and Wi-Fi. And critically, the current application process overlooks the lived experience and traditional knowledge that Native applicants bring.

Grand Canyon National Park encompasses the traditional lands of at least 11 tribes—the Havasupai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Las Vegas Band of Paiute Indians, Moapa Band of Paiute Indians, Navajo Nation, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Pueblo of Zuni, and Yavapai-Apache Nation. Like many of our national parks, its story is one of forced displacement of Native peoples who call it home. Today, only three tribes have reservations contiguous to the park: the Navajo Nation, Hualapai, and Havasupai. The Havasupai people, who consider themselves guardians of the Grand Canyon, were forcibly removed from within the park boundaries as recently as 1928. The brutal and heartbreaking land grab that came with the creation of the park cut Native people off from migration paths, ancestral trails, places of emergence, and gathering sites, to name a few.

LEFT: Native employees of Grand Canyon National Park on the South Rim during Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 11, 2021, a few days after it was proclaimed a national holiday by President Biden. B. MAUL, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
RIGHT: Renae Yellowhorse at a meeting of the Intertribal Centennial Conversations Group in 2018. JAKE HOYUNGOWA
FAR RIGHT: Jim Enote (on screen) addresses the Intertribal Centennial Conversations Group at a meeting in March 2022. RAYMOND CHEE

> "I'd like to see more people involved that are from the area, that know the history of the environment in that local region. People need to feel welcome there, and we can share our histories and our cultures with people who are genuinely interested.
> *Richard Powskey, Hualapai*

Under the leadership of Superintendent Ed Keable, for the past two years Grand Canyon National Park has been taking serious steps to retell the history of the Grand Canyon in a way that honors the Indigenous peoples of the canyon who are still here. With this have come management efforts like quarterly meetings with Native staff, a new Native Artisans Market at the Grand Canyon Tusayan Museum, and an improved process for hiring from local tribes.

Up until last year, the Grand Canyon National Park hiring system only favored local candidates, including tribal members, if they lived within 30 miles of the park. This left members of most of the 11 associated tribes little choice but to wade into the bureaucratic federal hiring process if they wanted a job at the park. Thanks to efforts by Superintendent Keable, the park secured what is called a "contiguous hiring authority" that extends to a 90-mile circumference. Now, the park can readily hire employees from six nearby tribal nations (Havasupai, Hualapai, San Juan Southern Paiute, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Navajo, and Hopi).

The park's contiguous hiring authority (sometimes called a "contiguous-to-area hire") can streamline hiring locals (including tribal members) for certain jobs at the park that are classified as excepted service. For local Native people, this hiring authority is a step in the right direction, but even the National Park Service recognizes it has significant shortcomings.

The biggest flaw in the new hiring authority is that it does not increase employee representation from all 11 associated tribes of the Grand Canyon. It excludes five local tribes (Las Vegas Band of Paiute Indians, Moapa Band of Paiute Indians, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Pueblo of Zuni, and Yavapai-Apache Nation) whose reservations are farther away from the park. It also only applies to technical, clerical, and maintenance jobs, which have lower salary caps and are often seasonal. If you are familiar with federal jobs, these are GS-7/WG-10 and lower jobs. Under this policy, workers don't qualify for park housing, which means they must commute, sometimes hundreds of miles, for a job. And anyone hired this way does not have a lot of mobility to transfer to other competitive jobs in the park service. You may be stuck reapplying from scratch (hello again, USAjobs.gov).

> "We're here right now. We work in the parks. We work to defend and protect the parks. Talk to me, ask me about my history. Ask me about how I feel about the canyon. Don't ask a historian. Don't ask an archaeologist that's not Diné or a Native. Ask me, I'm right here.
> *Renae Yellowhorse, Diné (Navajo)*

The Grand Canyon Trust has been connecting with current and former park service employees to learn about hiring challenges and explore ways to increase hiring from all Grand Canyon tribes at all levels of park management. Federal agencies, like the park service, can be given authority to hire based on "local expertise and experience" and expedite hiring for specific occupations, pay-grades, and locations when needed. We believe the park needs this kind of direct-hire authority to automatically make members of the 11 associated tribes eligible for jobs based on their expertise, under a streamlined process.

This wouldn't be a federal hiring preference, like the one given to veterans or Bureau of Indian Affairs employees. Instead of basing hiring on race or ethnicity, a new direct-hire authority would make local expertise, including that of tribal members, the main criteria to be eligible for a range of temporary, career, and permanent positions, not just technical, maintenance, and clerical jobs. It would also

open up access to higher-paying jobs above grades GS-7/WG-10.

This hiring authority would be different from the Indian Preference policies in place under Title VII for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services and similar to the local-hire authority in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act that is not racially based but gives "special consideration to local residents who have special knowledge of the conservation units near their communities."

The big question is how to get this done. Legislation, executive order, and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management are means of changing hiring at Grand Canyon National Park. To make sure it lasts, the Trust believes reform should come in the form of legislation, safe from the whims of changing administrations. This legislation would also be an opportunity to recognize the lands of the Grand Canyon as traditional Indigenous lands that are best managed by those with local and traditional knowledge and expertise.

Though reform could increase the number of Native employees at the park, it is important to note that it is not a form of tribal co-management. Increased Native hiring at the park might also take tribal employees away from jobs within their respective tribal governments. Nonetheless, tribal voices, like the Intertribal Centennial Conversations Group, have identified employment as one key reform needed for the park's second century. Through increased representation at all levels of park management, the original stewards of the land can help direct how it is cared for, for generations to come.

This reform won't be perfect but it's a starting point. Grand Canyon National Park and gateway communities like Tusayan and Cameron will need to address housing and transportation gaps, which will create additional employment opportunities outside of the park.

> "The Havasupai people right now reside on the reservation in Supai Village, which is 50 miles west of the south rim of Grand Canyon National Park. But this whole area is aboriginal territory for the Havasupai people, my people. . . This whole area belonged to them, my ancestors.
> *Coleen Kaska, Havasupai*

Of the approximately 500 employees at Grand Canyon National Park, somewhere upward of 25 are Native. Native employees face a number of challenges inside the park, including housing shortages and long commute times, alleged discrimination, and lack of opportunities for year-round employment, to name a few. Hiring reform is just one of the many changes the Intertribal Centennial Conversations Group identified as a need for the park. Native people need access to their traditional lands to collect medicinal plants, and for other traditional gathering and ceremonial uses. And tribal communities deserve their fair share of the hundreds of millions of dollars tourists spend in the region each year.

> "Our ancestral homelands, as far as the Hualapai people go, encompassed 7 million acres of northwestern Arizona. . . we traversed from area to area utilizing the natural resources for food, for medicine, for housing, for trade.
> *Loretta Jackson-Kelly, Hualapai*

Ultimately, hiring reform that increases the representation of the 11 local tribes among park staff and fosters a safer place for Native employees is a crucial step in centering Indigenous culture, history, and perspectives in park management. It is our hope that Grand Canyon National Park can serve as a model for hiring reform that is then scaled across federally managed lands on the Colorado Plateau and beyond. We are overdue for management changes that create welcoming and inclusive spaces for Indigenous voices, beliefs, and priorities.

Amanda Podmore serves as Grand Canyon director at the Grand Canyon Trust.

Creating New Space in the Grand Canyon Economy

By Jessica Stago

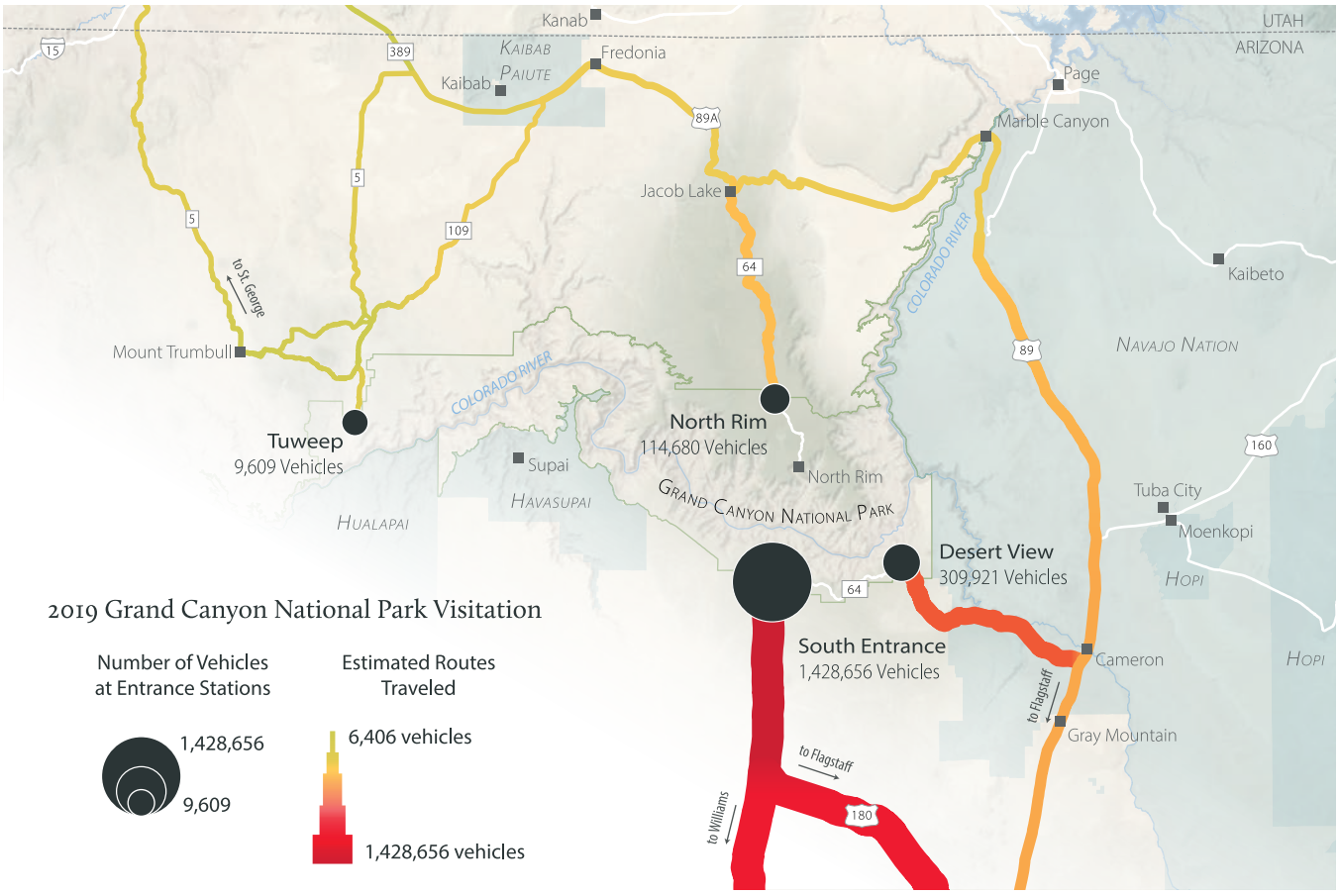
I grew up going to Grand Canyon National Park with my family. But despite being an enthusiastic hiker, I'd never set foot on Bright Angel Trail until a few years ago.

On those family trips we didn't hike, or raft the river, or ride a mule down to Phantom Ranch. Sometimes, if we had the time, we might pause for a quiet moment along the rim. We were there for a practical purpose: to sell jewelry. Not the inauthentic trinkets you might find in some of the gift shops, manufactured continents and oceans away, but authentic Navajo-made silver and turquoise pieces, expertly crafted by the hands of my relatives. We traveled from Seba Dalkai to sell their work to the Hopi House at the Grand Canyon because this is where the tourists flocked, and of course still do.

In 2021, 4.5 million people from countries around the world visited Grand Canyon National Park. Following a global pandemic, the Grand Canyon remains one of the most sought-after destinations for tourists craving an outdoor experience. These visitors spent $710 million in communities near the park last year alone, supporting 9,390 jobs. The economic impact of Grand Canyon National Park is hard to overstate, not just in Arizona but in the entire region. It's one of the seven natural wonders of the world and can accommodate thousands of visitors per day consistently, year-round. And all of these people need somewhere to eat, somewhere to sleep, rest, and enjoy the scenery of a landscape so unique that people travel from all over the world simply to stand at the edge of the cliff and experience the wonder.

More intrepid outdoor enthusiasts require dry bags and bathing suits to brave the rafting of the Colorado River or hiking poles and energy drinks to take on the challenge of a rim-to-rim hike. They enthusiastically hire guide companies, shop in stores in Flagstaff for sunscreen, backpacks, and gaiters, and get a good night's rest before and after their adventure at local hotels. Many repeat this experience over and over, supporting companies in gateway communities and contributing to an economy that was developed to encourage them to return.

Hopi House, Grand Canyon National Park. MICHAEL QUINN, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS (IRMA) PORTAL

LEFT: Tourists arriving at the south rim of the Grand Canyon. MICHAEL QUINN, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
RIGHT: Heavy foot traffic in downtown Flagstaff. BLAKE MCCORD

Tourism as an economic driver may start organically, but to be successful in the long term it requires an underlying organization and infrastructure focused on the visitor experience and directing visitor spending in certain ways.

Indigenous communities have long been a driving force when it comes to tourism in the Southwest, drawing visitors to the region or enhancing the experience of the Grand Canyon and the surrounding natural attractions. However, visitors' interactions with Indigenous people are mainly limited to perusing the wares of roadside vendors selling locally made beadwork, dream catchers, and other artwork, or attending a cultural event like a dance performance. These visitors may be vaguely aware that this land ancestrally belonged to Indigenous peoples but are often bombarded with a commercial version of the history and culture that glosses over a violent past and flattens sophisticated lifeways. Then when these travelers

TOP LEFT: A traditional hogan at Shash Diné Eco-Retreat on the Navajo Nation near Page, Arizona. TOP RIGHT: Roadside vendors on the Navajo Nation. JAKE HOYUNGOWA ABOVE: Alberta Henry, owner and operator of Big Hogan Enterprise, a glamping resort on the Navajo Nation 15 minutes from Grand Canyon National Park's east entrance, examining a pictograph panel near the resort. JAKE HOYUNGOWA

exit the park, leaving the neon signs and ice cream shops and racks of Grand Canyon keychains behind, and proceed east through Navajo and Hopi, or west through Hualapai, they wonder why there is such a stark difference between the communities off the reservation and communities within the boundaries of a reservation. The erasure of Indigenous people from our learned history and from appropriate representations within Grand Canyon National Park ultimately results, ironically, in an unfair economic disadvantage for the very people and communities that hold the Grand Canyon sacred and have stewarded the protection of this place for centuries.

Reservation boundaries were historically created to contain Indigenous people and protect non-Native communities from what were considered "uncivilized" lifestyles. These boundaries also represent an invisible wall that hinders the financial freedom of Indigenous communities to build economic infrastructure that would support economic development. It represents a kind of redlining where people don't have land available to them—reservation land is held in trust by the federal government—and can't access the financial resources they need to start businesses, like capital, but also basic infrastructure like internet service, much less build roads or visitor centers to welcome tourists and support a vibrant tourism industry. Say you own your home on the reservation and want to start a small business. How do you get a small business loan if you can't use your home as collateral because you don't own the land it's built on? The truth is that nearly all the economic benefits of Grand Canyon visitation never reach reservation communities and instead flow to off-reservation border towns like Flagstaff, Tusayan, and Page, that have the physical and financial infrastructure—from hotels and banks to restaurants and supermarkets—built to absorb that value.

An authentic experience includes the first peoples of the canyon; we tell our stories better and people want to hear our stories.

But reservations have something border towns don't. Visitors coming to the Grand Canyon increasingly seek an experience that gives them the opportunity to learn about Native cultures from Native people. Native people are ready to welcome visitors into their communities in a planned and coordinated manner that enhances the experience by appropriately teaching visitors about the culture while also protecting knowledge that isn't appropriate to share with outsiders. For Indigenous communities, part of that infrastructure is a socially conscious consideration that takes time to plan and develop. Bringing people together is a blessing in many Native communities. This is why folks are often invited to a dance, a social ceremonial event, or a birthday party. We gather as families and as communities very often and it's something that we like to share with visitors. Given the resources, we could build a tourism industry that is centered on a pride in our hospitality and the importance of educating

others about who we are as people, and the values that we hold that this world desperately needs. In this way, our communities would have greater control over what is shared and what is not, where visitors can go and where they can't. We can implement reciprocity in the tourism industry that creates a more equitable relationship.

In the meantime, discussions around improving employment opportunities for Native people in the park have already begun [see Amanda Podmore's story on hiring reform at the park on page 12]. It's a small step, but it's a start. Successful collaboration for economic development starts with improving relationships between Indigenous people and the National Park Service, and acknowledging the painful history of violent removal of Indigenous people from what are now America's national parks. Better relationships will improve communication and open up opportunities for retail businesses and guide companies owned and operated by Native people. And listening to and including Indigenous people will provide information needed to protect the land and waterways of the entire Grand Canyon region.

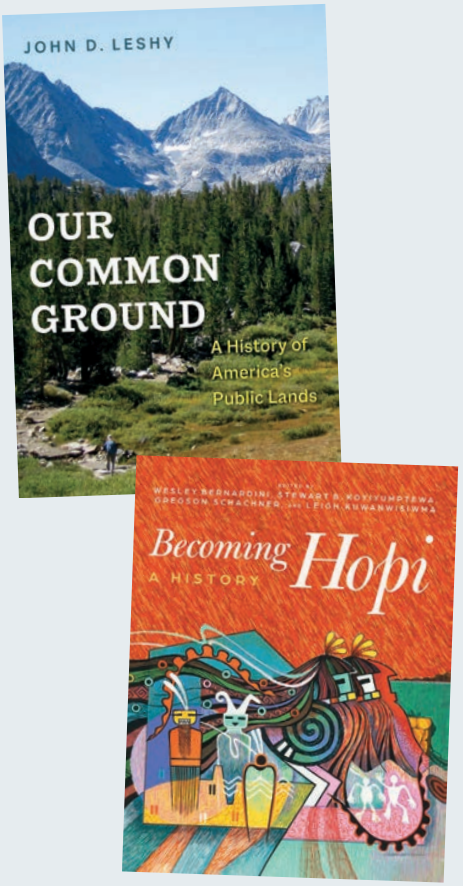
There are legal and contractual obstacles to a more equitable distribution of the economic benefits of Grand Canyon tourism, and especially to shifting the power of the retail industry within the park, but these can be overcome with time. Concessionaires hold lease agreements with the park service that limit competition and control what is sold within the park; these agreements can last for decades. However, paying artists and creatives who contribute their talent to enhancing the visitor experience in the park must shift now. The business model traders have used to exploit the talent of economically oppressed artists has always been and remains deeply harmful. My family was happy to sell their artwork to the stores, happy to contribute their talent to make things people wanted, but I can tell you firsthand the frustration of realizing that what we got in monetary value from all that hard work I witnessed was barely 30 percent of the value of these pieces. Calculating all the costs of production meant realizing what economic exploitation was. Bracelets and necklaces representing hours of skilled artistic labor were sold off at a fraction of their true value because the shops at the park had what we didn't: access to a huge customer base of visitors on vacation, with money to spend. National parks have a role in changing this and in valuing the human capital of the very people whose skills, knowledge, and labor authentically enhance the visitor experience. The park service can create new space that would open up business opportunities for Native-owned businesses. It can build partnerships with gateway communities to compete for financial resources such as grants and federal investments to build these new spaces and the physical infrastructure needed. It can commit to providing accurate information about what the Grand Canyon means to Indigenous people that can protect it from harmful industries. Let's not forget, all of this is in the best interest of the canyon as well as the tourism industry. An authentic experience includes the first peoples of the canyon; we tell our stories better and people want to hear our stories.

How quickly that comes to be will depend on how partnerships build the infrastructure and create the space required for that shift to happen.

Jessica Stago serves as the Grand Canyon Trust's Native American economic initiatives director and as the director of business incubation at Change Labs.

ON THE TRUST **BOOKSHELF**

Finally, we have a truly great book about the federal public lands. John Leshy has used his unequalled knowledge and engaging style to write a comprehensive, inspiring, and lastingly informative masterpiece. —Charles Wilkinson, author of *Crossing the Next Meridian: Land, Water, and the Future of the West*



Becoming Hopi brilliantly combines Hopi and non-Hopi voices in helping to rewrite Hopi history and the process of becoming Hopi…The combination and use of traditional, archaeological, and documentary histories unfolds a rare perspective on what it means to be Hopi. —Barbara Mills, co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Southwest Archaeology*

Four Corners, Uranium,

By Chaitna Sinha

Western scientists now believe that time is both linear and circular. If this is true, then every object must eventually return to its own beginning—to the past. I have been thinking a lot about the past lately. In February of this year, I started as a staff attorney for the Grand Canyon Trust and moved to Durango, Colorado from Albuquerque, New Mexico. It's been both new, and deeply familiar. For 20 years I have come and gone from the Four Corners. This is the first place I lived as an adult. It is where I applied to law school, where I learned about Indian law and the role tribes play in managing natural resources, and where I met my husband. If time is circular, then the Four Corners and the uranium that is embedded in both the rock and the history of the region have been my focal point.

TOP: Water towers in White Mesa, Utah. TIM PETERSON
RIGHT: The 2021 rally and spiritual walk organized by the White Mesa Concerned Community to protest the nearby White Mesa Mill. TIM PETERSON

and Coming Back Home

I grew up in Salt Lake City, Utah, but from an early age I was drawn to the wild landscape of the Colorado Plateau. I liked its contradictions; they felt reflective of my own experience. It was wild and remote, and where we looked to satisfy our unquenchable desire for more energy. You passed tour buses of international tourists and hogans on the same drive. The soundscapes transitioned from ATVs roaring to wind blowing through ponderosa pines in a few short miles. The wide-open spaces held a place for someone like me, the child of East Indian immigrants, even when my own community didn't.

As a young college student, I studied environmental issues. When I was ready to graduate from college, I found myself uncertain about the world I was walking into, and convinced that our current framework was unsustainable, but I wanted to try to make a difference. So, at 23, I made the five-hour drive from Salt Lake City to White Mesa, a small community of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, near what would become Bears Ears National Monument, and just down the road from the White Mesa Mill—now the last operating conventional uranium-processing mill in the country. I took up residence in the last pink house on Cowboy Street along with three other AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers and the black lab that was living on the front porch when I got there. The community was gracious enough to accept a recent college grad with good intentions, and kind enough to teach me what it really means to fight for equity. If I had once thought change was a war that could be won; what I learned at White Mesa is that real change is about slow and steady progress. It can take generations of unfaltering commitment. Every day I saw people working to improve the education their kids received, enhance the economic opportunities available to them, and preserve the culture and traditions of the tribe.

During that year on the White Mesa Reservation, I would pass the mill every day. I would come to learn that the people regulating the mill live in Salt Lake City, five hours and 300 miles away. The corporate decision-makers for the mill work even farther away, near Denver, approximately 430 miles and seven hours away. I heard stories from community members about the mill, and listened to their concerns about how it was impacting the air and the water. I saw how their concerns were being dismissed by the mill's operators, by regulators, and by politicians.

The community was gracious enough to accept a recent college grad with good intentions, and kind enough to teach me what it really means to fight for equity.

I didn't know then that this mill, and the uranium it represents, would become an overarching presence in my life. I could see it from my porch. It loomed large while I studied for the LSAT. It became the source of an ongoing conversation with my father—an engineer who has worked in the mining industry for decades primarily focused on site investigation, mine design, closure, and reclamation. I wanted to know how the mill worked, how it was regulated, and how the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe could protect its resources and its members. What was the balance between needing minerals and protecting the environment? Is such a thing even possible? Twenty years later I am still looking for answers to many of these questions, but my father told me two things that continue to hold true for me: We do not have the right to exploit every last corner of the Earth, and just because we can do something doesn't mean we should.

A few years later, law degree in hand, I would find myself back in the Four Corners, this time as associate general counsel for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The kids I'd tutored were older, and another generation was growing up in the shadow of the mill. In 2007 the mill applied for a renewal of its operating license, which would reveal that liners in several of the tailings cells—massive pits where radioactive waste from uranium processing is stored—consisted of a single PVC membrane about the thickness of a credit card. These liners were installed in the 1980s. The liner, a little bit of dirt, and a layer of crushed rock are all that prevents radioactive material from escaping into the natural environment. The state of Utah had previously called the leak-detection systems—the systems designed to alert regulators and the mill's operators if the liners are leaking—"grossly inadequate." Since the tailings cells were constructed, the industry

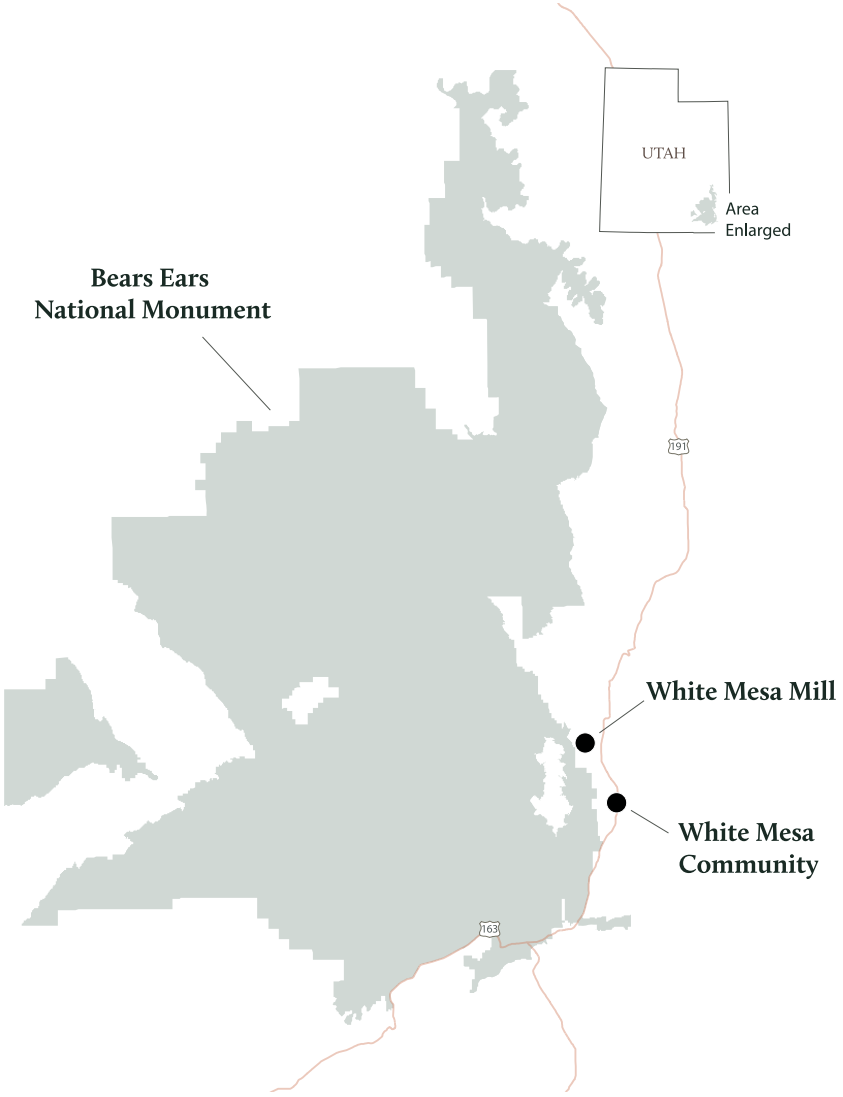
Forty-acre waste pits Cell 4A (top) and Cell 4B (bottom) at the White Mesa Mill on July 7, 2022. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the mill has been violating the Clean Air Act since at least June 2020 by leaving radioactive material in Cell 4B exposed to open air rather than covered in liquid to control radon emissions, as legally required. TIM PETERSON, FLOWN BY ECOFLIGHT

standard has shifted to double liners that are thicker and made of different material. The newer cells at the mill adopted these standards. In 2008, the state of Utah found that multiple groundwater samples taken near the mill contained nitrate and nitrite. Today, there is a corrective action plan in place to address the nitrate plume beneath the mill. Meanwhile, back in 1999, almost a decade earlier, the Utah Division of Radiation Control had urged the mill's owner to monitor groundwater for nitrate and nitrite, calling them "smoking gun" leakage parameters. But after years of investigation and negotiation with the mill's owner, the state of Utah determined both that it could not specifically identify the source of the nitrate plume, and that it could not rule out the mill's activities as the source. The community of White Mesa, like everyone else living in proximity to the mill, is forced to live with this uncertainty.

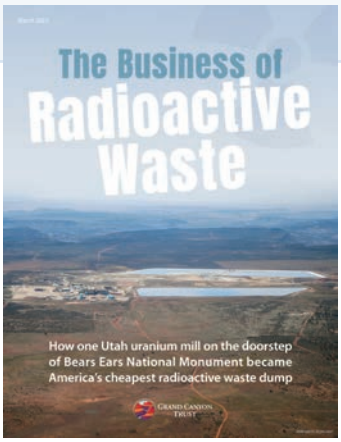
I would come to understand how the mill's operations extend far beyond the community of White Mesa. I met my husband soon after I started to work for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. He is from Shiprock, on the Navajo Nation. His childhood home is two miles from a uranium disposal site managed by the U.S. Department of Energy. Past milling operations have left contaminants in the groundwater system. There are at least 523 abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation that have yet to be remediated. Half of these mines still have gamma radiation levels more than 10 times the background level. Nearly all are located within a mile of a natural water source. And 17 are just 200 feet away—or fewer—from an occupied residence. Experts estimate that, as a result, 85 percent of all Navajo homes are currently contaminated with uranium. The White Mesa Mill's owner views the waste from these mines as a source of potential revenue.

Working as a staff attorney for the Colville Tribes near Spokane, Washington the mill would again reemerge. The Colville and Spokane tribes have worked for decades to help remediate the impacts from radioactive waste from the Midnite Mine, a highly contaminated Superfund site on the Spokane Indian Reservation that once produced uranium for nuclear weapons. Waste from this site has been transferred to the White Mesa Mill. The mill's operators view this too as a source of revenue.

Since starting at the Trust I have been struck by how much has changed, and how much has stayed the same. Many of the regulators from the state



READ THE REPORT



HOW THE WHITE MESA MILL, just up the road from the Ute Mountain Ute community of White Mesa and a mile from Bears Ears National Monument, became America's cheapest radioactive waste dump.

Download your copy at
grandcanyontrust.org/radioactive

of Utah are the same as a decade ago, still 300 miles away. Many of the same community members I worked with as a VISTA volunteer still live in White Mesa; they are still concerned about the air and the water. The mill has rebranded itself as a recycling facility, and most of its activities now involve processing so-called "alternate feeds"—low-level radioactive wastes. The mill extracts minimal amounts of uranium from these wastes and disposes of the rest, often for a fee. Groundwater monitoring data shows additional constituents of concern. Because the mill's operators failed to comply with the laws designed to protect people from radon, a cancer-causing gas, in December 2021, the Environmental Protection Agency prohibited the mill from accepting wastes from other Superfund sites like the Midnite Mine, before reversing most of its decision, after pushback from the mill's owner. Public awareness about the mill has grown as well. The Trust recently released a first-of-its-kind report documenting the alternate-feed waste streams accepted at the mill. The local community in White Mesa is more active and more vocal about its concerns. The leadership of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe has now called for the mill's closure citing its severe impacts on the health of residents of White Mesa.

So, here I am again, back in the shadow of uranium. Most of the uranium used in the bomb dropped on Hiroshima was processed in Durango, a few miles from my home. But now I have an even more pressing need to do this work. I have a three-year-old daughter. She's half Navajo and loves to spend time with her grandma on the Navajo Reservation. She reminds me a lot of the kids I worked with in White Mesa. She has started asking me recently what I do all day. I hope that I'll be able to say that I made things a little fairer, that I helped make sure that everyone plays by the rules, and that I worked hard to give everyone a chance to be heard. Most of all, I hope that I can help ensure that when she grows up, she will inherit a new legacy. The uranium can't be put back in the ground, but we can and must do better than contaminated groundwater, liners from the 1980s, and abandoned uranium mines. The past didn't go anywhere, but what we do with it is up to us.

Prior to joining the Grand Canyon Trust as a staff attorney in 2022, Chaitna Sinha worked in the nonprofit and government sectors with a focus on federal Indian law and natural resources law.

GLEN CANYON EXPOSED

by Dawn Kish

LEFT: Research scientist Seth Arens takes in the beauty of Cathedral in the Desert, Escalante Canyon. DAWN KISH ABOVE: The author at work.

Photographer Tad Nichols (1911 – 2000) first ran the Colorado River through Glen Canyon in 1950, discovering a labyrinthine world of twisting slot canyons, flowing streams, magnificent amphitheaters, and naked red rock. For the next 13 years until the Glen Canyon Dam was completed and Lake Powell began to fill in 1963, Nichols explored what is often called "America's lost national park."

Working for the Sierra Club and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Nichols' artistic photographs provide one of the most extensive historical portraits of Glen Canyon before the dam. Nichols passed away just after his book, "Glen Canyon: Images of a Lost World," was published in 1999. The book is out of print, but it contains the best photographic documentation of what many consider the most beautiful canyon system in the Southwest.

Richard Jackson comparing Tad's photos to today's views. DAWN KISH

Glen Canyon is finally emerging because Lake Powell water levels are dropping at an incredible speed. Dawn Kish, a conservation photographer and filmmaker, was given Nichols' 4x5 film camera a few years ago by Nichols' friend and printer, Richard Jackson, and she is now returning to Glen Canyon to expose what she finds.

Over the past nine months, Kish started to write to Tad in her journal about creating art and documenting this reemergence.

Dropping water levels reveal a sunken boat. DAWN KISH

Dear Tad,

I'm writing you to let you know that I'm borrowing your 1950s Crown Graphic 4x5 camera and I'm going to use it to expose Glen Canyon and its emergence from its watery tomb.

My name is Dawn Kish and I'm a photographer like you. You don't know me but I'm a big fan of your work. I feel like you are the Ansel Adams of Glen Canyon. In your book, "Glen Canyon: Images of a Lost World," your photographs really spoke to me. You can feel that this canyon is so dear to your heart and soul.

Thank you for your time, light, and vision, and for trying to preserve one of our precious canyons in the Southwest with your photographs. You fought to save this landscape from the Glen Canyon Dam, but unfortunately the canyon became a giant reservoir—Lake Powell.

TOP: Quagga mussels are a nonnative nuisance species. They cause severe ecological damage to Lake Powell. DAWN KISH MIDDLE: Padre Butte, Lake Powell. DAWN KISH BOTTOM: Trees reemerging from the waters. DAWN KISH

Well, I want you to know that the lake is now at its all-time historic low since the 1960s because of drought, human consumption, and climate change. Mother Nature is just taking over.

When I heard the news, I was curious and wanted to know what was happening. I wanted to see Glen Canyon. The canyon I never got to experience except in photographs, books, and film. I wanted to see where you explored for over 12 years with your cameras. And where you made the most beautiful images of this epic landscape.

So I went on a journey with your camera, real 4x5 film, my Nikon DSLR, and adventurous friends. We got our feet stuck in the mud, found returning stands of cottonwood trees, and saw lake sediment flushing out of the side canyons.

We witnessed lake levels dropping and the canyon walls growing. It was an exploration of the unknown, like looking for buried treasure. I was spellbound with every turn of the canyon. I felt like a tiny ant up against the massive painted cliffs of Tapestry Wall and mesmerized by the curving sandstone in Labyrinth Canyon.

On the Colorado River in Glen Canyon across from Hite North Marina. See 3D maps on opposite page. DAWN KISH

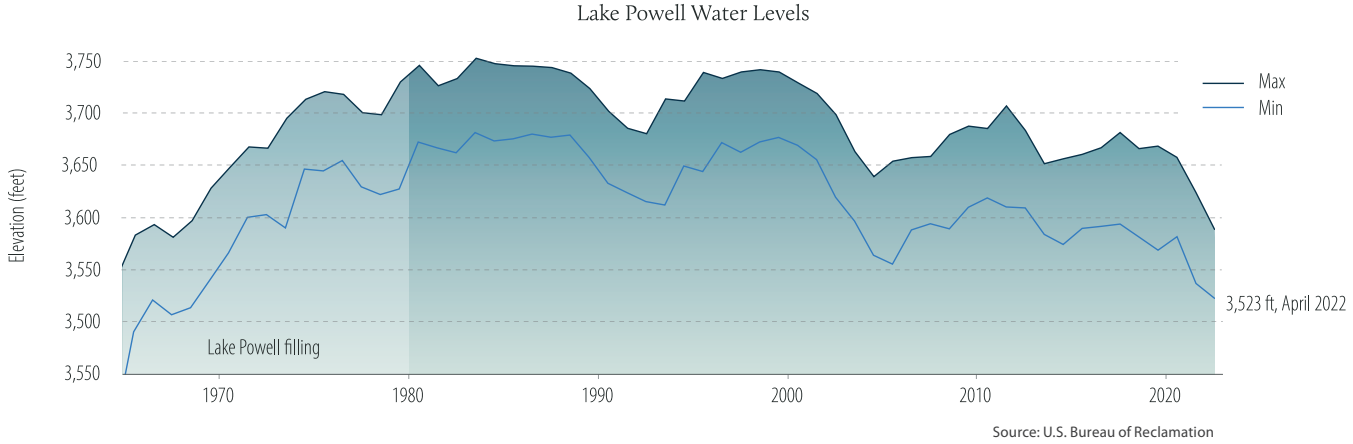
When I arrived at Hite Marina, I cried when I saw the mighty Colorado River flowing. My heart pounding, the river took my breath away. I knew I had to document this historic moment and run the returning river. We put in at North Wash, across the river from the closed Hite Marina in Utah, and I rowed a replica of an old wooden boat that Norm Nevills created. It looks very similar to the boats you used to run. At camp, we got slammed with a major wind-and-rain storm that broke my tent and biblically humbled us. The next day, we explored for about 10 miles and ran a few rapids until the river hit the lake. I never thought in my lifetime that I would run the river through Glen Canyon.

So far, many of the photos I have taken have been under water. Well, that is what the waypoint says on my most recent GPS map. According to today's map, I need a snorkel and some underwater housing, but these photographs are proof I'm on exposed dry land. Your camera was intimidating at first, but now I'm finding a flow with it. I feel like I'm creating my most important work. I'll be going into the darkroom soon to see the negatives and create prints. This whole process is exciting, and I am hopeful that others will be elated about the return of this amazing canyon too.

ESRI, DIGITALGLOBE, EARTHSTAR GEOGRAPICS, CNES/AIRBUS DS, USDA FSA, USGS, AEROGRID, IGN, IGP, AND THE GIS USER COMMUNITY

Water levels near Hite North Marina have been dropping drastically over time. Notice the Colorado River emerging from the lake in the lower map.

Lake Powell began filling on March 13, 1963 and would not reach full capacity until more than 17 years later, on June 22, 1980, when waters rose to an elevation of 3,700 feet above sea level, with the 710-foot Glen Canyon Dam holding back over 26 million acre-feet (nearly 8.5 trillion gallons) of water. Today, the water in Lake Powell has dropped to its lowest level since the early 1970s, back when the reservoir was still filling.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

TOP: It's now a very long ride down the boat ramp to the dropping waters of Lake Powell at Bullfrog Marina. DAWN KISH
BOTTOM: Tapestry Wall, Glen Canyon. DAWN KISH

Tad's camera on Norm Nevills' boat. DAWN KISH

In the 1960s, David Brower, director of the Sierra Club, said it was his biggest "mistake" to let Glen Canyon go to save Dinosaur National Monument instead. You mentioned that Glen Canyon was a dozen Dinosaurs. From my exploration, I agree, and I know why you wanted to preserve this magical place.

Now it is my turn to preserve this canyon and document the reemerging Glen Canyon. It's my turn to create art and advocacy. I hope this project will inspire all generations to not make the same mistakes.

Six different trips, 16 days on the lake. This was just a tiny blip of a view. I need more time. I need 16 years and I know that would not even scratch the surface. I had no idea that I would feel so overwhelmed by this seductive canyon. I'll just have to return for more. For more beauty.

Thank you for your inspiration, creativity, and your camera. I'll let you know what develops.

Your biggest fan,
Dawn Kish

Find more of Dawn's work at **dawnkish.com**

Take a deep breath.

Silence.

Peace.

Healing.

Beauty.

Find your quiet place.
grandcanyontrust.org/hikes

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Kaya McAlister

Hometown: Duck Creek Village, Utah
Volunteer since: **July 2021**
Total hours donated: **85** and counting

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF.
I live with my partner on the mountainous edges of the Colorado Plateau, where I am currently tending to a small garden and building a tiny home. I'm 28, a writer, and a guide for off-grid mindfulness retreats.

I've been on four Trust volunteer trips and they feel like educational field trips for adults—a nice balance of work, rest, exploration, learning, and conversing. I like the way so many important topics are woven in, from social justice to ecology.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PROJECT AND WHY?
Creating beaver dam analogs (beaver dams built by humans). They definitely brought out an inner child in me because I got to play beaver and squish my toes in the mud. And the results were obvious the very next day…in some cases, within minutes.

WHAT SHOULD FIRST-TIME VOLUNTEERS KNOW?
Each day you wake up to coffee, breakfast, and birdsong. The work is paced really nicely. Snack and water breaks are encouraged, and if you don't know how to do something, you'll learn! Everyone is very supportive and patient. Days end with an incredible meal at camp and a discussion around the metaphorical campfire. It's a wonderful little ephemeral community of people who care deeply for the land. If we've finished early, there's almost always the option of a group hike. I 100 percent recommend it.

Thank you, Kaya!

Find your next volunteer trip at
grandcanyontrust.org/volunteer

The Grand Canyon Protection Act: Closer Than Ever

By Amber Reimondo

Like the faint smell of rain in June as the parched rims of the Grand Canyon await the first storm of the monsoon season, the possibility of a permanent mining ban around the Grand Canyon is nearer than ever. Will it become law at last? We may soon know the answer to that question.

K. THOMAS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

After more than a decade of work by tribes and a broad coalition of supporters, the Grand Canyon Protection Act—a bill that would make permanent an existing temporary mining ban on approximately 1 million acres of federally managed lands adjacent to Grand Canyon National Park—has gained more ground than ever before.

Legislation to permanently protect the Grand Canyon region from uranium mining was originally introduced by Arizona Congressman Raúl Grijalva in 2009. The spark was a brief spike in uranium prices that led to thousands of new mining claims being staked on federally managed lands near the Grand Canyon, triggering public concern. In 2012, the Obama administration listened to public outcry, and established a temporary ban on new uranium mines and mining claims on public lands around the Grand Canyon after a careful review and public comment process. This ban is still in place today and is scheduled to last for 20 years—the maximum time allowed for administrative mining bans; a permanent ban requires an act of Congress. But tribes and community members from an array of backgrounds and political ideologies have pressed on. While a temporary ban is helpful, it's not enough. A place as culturally, environmentally, and economically significant as the Grand Canyon deserves to never again be marred by uranium operations when the temporary ban expires, or worse, if it's ever lifted before its expiration date, something mining proponents have advocated.

A place as culturally, environmentally, and economically significant as the Grand Canyon deserves to never again be marred by uranium operations...

Since its conception, the Grand Canyon Protection Act has passed the U.S. House many times, but the measure has continually stalled in the Senate. It wasn't until the current

Become a Sustaining Circle Member

for as little as $5/month

Your monthly gift provides the steady support we rely on to help protect the Grand Canyon and the entire Colorado Plateau for future generations.

...

Become a member of our Sustaining Circle with your monthly gift online today. Visit **grandcanyontrust.org/monthly-giving**

...

For additional information, please contact **Kimber Wukitsch** at **928-286-3375** or **kimber@grandcanyontrust.org**

RICK GOLDWASSER

117th Congress (which began in January 2021 and ends January 3, 2023), that the bill also gained the much-needed support of both of Arizona's U.S. senators—Kyrsten Sinema and Mark Kelly. Sinema introduced the bill in the Senate in February 2021, with Senator Kelly cosponsoring, and, for the first time, the bill began moving in both chambers of Congress. This meant that the Grand Canyon Protection Act finally had a real path toward becoming law. With representation in both the U.S. House and Senate, the effort to permanently protect the Grand Canyon region from uranium contamination has hit unprecedented milestones and could still make the final push in 2022 through the Senate and to the president's desk to be signed into law.

So, what exactly are these major first-ever milestones for the bill? In June 2022, after months of waiting in line behind other legislative priorities in the Senate, the Grand Canyon Protection Act got a long-awaited hearing before a Senate subcommittee. In July, it got a vote before the full Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where it earned a tie vote of 10-10. This included a "yes" vote from the committee chairman, West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin. While a 10-10 vote isn't enough to automatically send the bill to the Senate floor, Senator Manchin and Senator Chuck Schumer, the Senate majority leader, could still decide to move the bill to the Senate floor. The Grand Canyon Trust continues to support tribal leaders, and work alongside local elected officials, business and faith leaders, hunting and fishing groups, and other members of the broad coalition behind the Grand Canyon Protection Act to push it over the finish line.

We hope to be reveling with you soon in the long-awaited relief that permanent protection for the Grand Canyon region would bring. In the meantime, join us in celebrating another small success in protecting the Colorado Plateau and supporting the region's Native peoples in their struggle against uranium contamination. Back in 2020, the Trump administration proposed a uranium reserve program that would have funded government purchases of newly mined uranium to build up a government stockpile of uranium. This could have effectively subsidized and jump-started uranium operations at facilities like the Canyon Mine (renamed Pinyon Plain Mine) near the south rim of the Grand Canyon (currently exempt from the temporary mining ban) and the White Mesa Mill in southeastern Utah, near the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe's White Mesa community and a mile from Bears Ears National Monument. Thanks to the leadership, advocacy, and hard work of tribes, including the Havasupai and the Ute Mountain Ute, the Grand Canyon Trust and our allies were successful in convincing the U.S. Department of Energy not to purchase uranium from these facilities. At least for now.

The work to show decision-makers the injustice of uranium operations on the Colorado Plateau continues on this front, through the Grand Canyon Protection Act. When it comes to environmental justice, it's more important than ever that Indigenous and other impacted communities are meaningfully heard as we shift away from harmful energy sources like uranium and fossil fuels and toward sustainable clean-energy sources.

Amber Reimondo leads the Grand Canyon Trust's energy work.

In Memory of

QUINN FIKE

August 4, 2005 – June 8, 2022

Gary and Mary Fike, longtime supporters of the Grand Canyon Trust, share a deep love for the Grand Canyon. Determined to imprint that love on their two teenage children, they embarked on a family trip of a lifetime through the canyon on the Colorado River in May.

Quinn, their sixteen-year-old daughter, was poised to make her mark on the world. She thrived in school, cared deeply for others, and treasured the wonders of the outdoor world. Tragically, within days of returning from their river trip, Quinn lost her life in a hiking accident. She will be missed by all who circled in her orbit.

To honor Quinn's life, Gary and Mary contributed a generous gift to their family named endowment. The Fike Family Endowment, and Quinn's memory, will live on in perpetuity through the Trust's work protecting the Grand Canyon for future generations. "Quinn would have loved it—I'm quite sure," shared Mary.

STAFF
Ethan Aumack, Executive Director

Adrianne Allen, Finance Manager
Darcy Allen, Senior Director of Administration
Lena Bain, Volunteer Associate
Deon Ben, Native America Director
Amber Benally, Rising Leaders Manager
Travis Bruner, Conservation Director
Joan Carstensen, Graphic Design Director
Marc Coles-Ritchie, Utah Public Lands Manager
Ashley Davidson, Communications Director
Kathleen Dudine, Administrative Manager
Libby Ellis, Senior Director of Development
Chelsea Griffin, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Manager
Ellen Heyn, Digital Media Director
Cerissa Hoglander, Climate Resilience Director
Singer Horse Capture, Native America Manager
Doug King, Information Technology Director
Audrey Kruse, Community Engagement Director
Daryn Akei Melvin, Grand Canyon Manager
Jerry Otero, Legislative and Policy Director
Aaron Paul, Staff Attorney
Jen Pelz, Water Advocacy Director
Tim Peterson, Cultural Landscapes Director
Amanda Podmore, Grand Canyon Director
Jack Pongyesva, Grand Canyon Associate
Mike Popejoy, Utah Public Lands Director
Amber Reimondo, Energy Director
Melanie Seus, Database Manager
Chaitna Sinha, Staff Attorney
Stephanie Smith, GIS Director
Jessica Stago, Native American Economic Initiatives Director
Tom Szymanoski, Finance Director
David Taft, Foundations Manager
Emily Thompson, Member Trips Manager
Michael Toll, Staff Attorney
David Vines, GIS Manager
Steph Wacha, Utah Public Lands Manager
Lisa Winters, Communications Associate
Kimber Wukitsch, Development Manager
...
Tom Sisk, PhD, Senior Science Advisor

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Jim Enote, Chair, Zuni, NM
Pam Eaton, Vice-Chair, Boulder, CO
Holly Holtz, Secretary-Treasurer, New York, NY
...
David Bonderman, Fort Worth, TX
Karletta Chief, Kayenta, AZ
John Echohawk, Boulder, CO
Terry Goddard, Phoenix, AZ
William O. Grabe, Sanibel, FL
Pam Hait, Phoenix, AZ
John Leshy, San Francisco, CA
Steve Martin, Edina, MN
Pete McBride, Basalt, CO
Sarah Cottrell Propst, Santa Fe, NM
Jennifer Speers, Salt Lake City, UT
Rhea Suh, Mill Valley, CA
David Tedesco, Paradise Valley, AZ
Rebecca Tsosie, Phoenix, AZ
Mark Udall, Eldorado Springs, CO
Trudy Vincent, Washington, DC
Patrick Von Bargen, Palm Springs, CA
Charles F. Wilkinson, Boulder, CO
Hansjoerg Wyss, Jackson, WY
...
Bert Fingerhut, Counselor, Palo Alto, CA
N. Scott Momaday, Poet Laureate, Santa Fe, NM
...
In Memory of Service:
James E. Babbitt, Board Trustee
David Getches, Emeritus Board Chair
Jim Trees, Founder and Emeritus Chair
Stewart L. Udall, Counselor

GRAND CANYON TRUST

2601 N Fort Valley Road Flagstaff, Arizona 86001 928-774-7488 **grandcanyontrust.org**

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Flagstaff, AZ
Permit No. 43

Leave a Grand Legacy

AMY S. MARTIN

When you name the Grand Canyon Trust in your will or estate plans,

you provide us with the means to protect the lands and waters you love for future generations. In these turbulent times, isn't it good to know you can count on us to deliver lasting results?

If you have named the Trust in your will, or as a beneficiary of an IRA or retirement plan, please let us know. We would like to thank you and welcome you to our Legacy Circle.

Making a bequest to the Trust

It's less complicated than it might seem. For information on how to make your bequest today, please contact **Libby Ellis** at **928-286-3387** or **lellis@grandcanyontrust.org**