

2023 IMPACT REPORT



GRAND CANYON
TRUST



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



MICHAEL QUINN, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Moments when the public spotlight turns to our work, such as the designation of a new national monument, are wondrous and rare. More often, as an advocacy organization, our work occurs when no one is looking—researching, educating, and building support behind the scenes. We are thrilled to share the big wins when they happen, and yet we also celebrate our slower, steady, and almost always quiet work to restore and heal lands that have been scarred by centuries of misuse. We believe every victory is a testament to the strength of our partnerships, the dedication of our passionate staff, and the commitment of our members. Thank you for supporting us along the way.

Ethan Aumack
Executive Director

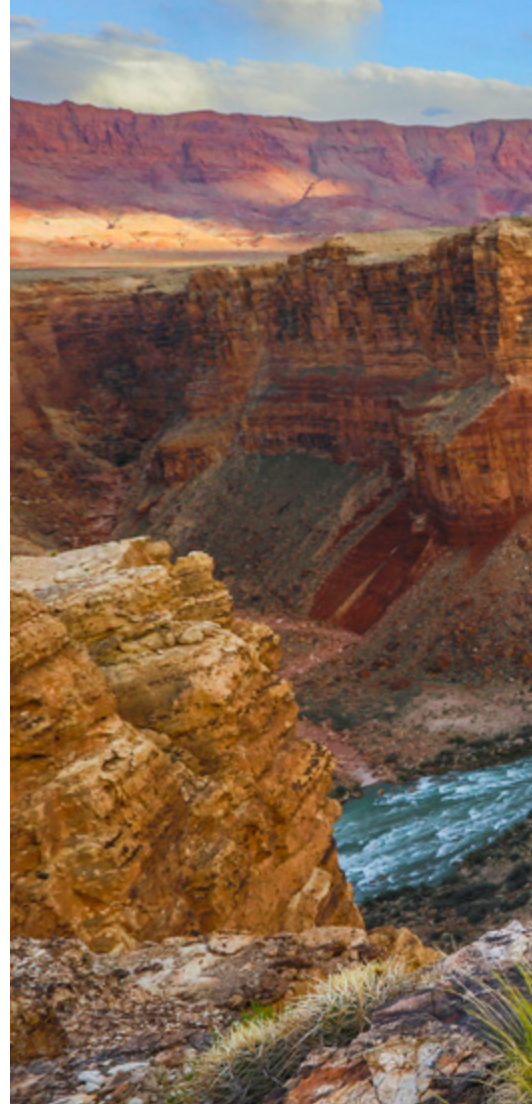


AMBER REIMONDO

The Grand Canyon Trust is widely known and admired as a dynamic and effective organization. While our high standing is appreciated, our success on many fronts results from knowing we cannot always succeed alone. The rationale of our support for tribal nations requires no explanation—trust, patience, timing, and good ambassadorship produce significant results. Thank you for persevering with us on this sometimes challenging but incredibly consequential journey.

Jim Enote
Chair, Grand Canyon Trust Board

BIDEN DESIGNATES BAAJ NWAAVJO I'TAH KUKVENI – ANCESTRAL FOOTPRINTS OF THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT



Baaj Nwaavjo means “where Indigenous peoples roam” in Havasupai
I'tah Kukveni means “our ancestral footprints” in Hopi

August 8, 2023, marked a historic day: President Biden created the new Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument to protect nearly 1 million acres surrounding Grand Canyon National Park, including sites of profound cultural, historical, and spiritual importance to many tribes. The lands within the monument were already federal public lands, but their new monument status offers an additional layer of protection such as permanently prohibiting new uranium mining claims from being staked—an issue that the Grand Canyon Trust has worked on for decades.

2,100

Grand Canyon Trust advocates signed a petition calling for President Biden to create the monument, and thousands more took action at keepitgrandaz.org at our urging

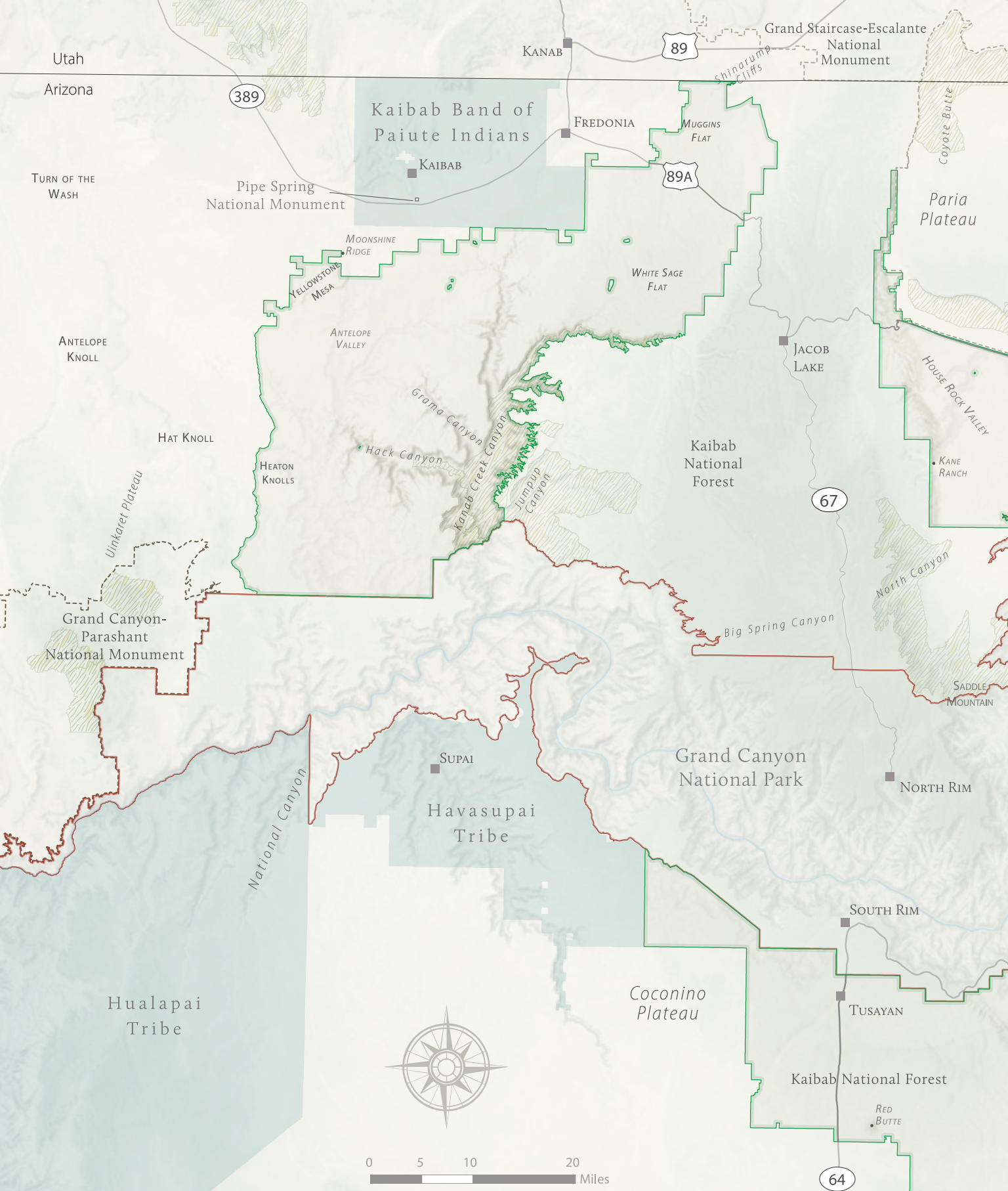


This designation is a major victory for regional tribes who have worked tirelessly for generations to preserve their ancestral lands and for the Grand Canyon Tribal Coalition, which proposed the monument. The Trust is grateful to the coalition for its vision and leadership, and proud to have supported this significant effort. At the direction of tribes, we now begin the challenging task of operationalizing the monument and ensuring its federal-intertribal collaborative management.

FAR LEFT: President Biden signs the proclamation establishing Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument in a ceremony at Red Butte on August 8, 2023 while Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, Congressman Raúl Grijalva, D-AZ, Colorado River Indian Tribes Chairwoman Amelia Flores, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, Hopi Tribe Chairman Timothy Nuvangyaoma, and other tribal leaders look on. Biden was introduced by Havasupai and Hopi youth leader Maya Tilousi-Lyttle (standing immediately behind the president). U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

ABOVE: Looking out from the rim of Marble Canyon where Badger Creek meets the Colorado River, along the eastern edge of the monument. AMY S. MARTIN

LEFT: Grand Canyon Trust Energy Director Amber Reimondo and Grand Canyon Tribal Coalition coordinator Carletta Tilousi, Havasupai, celebrate the monument's designation at the proclamation ceremony. AMBER REIMONDO



BAAJ NWAAVJO I'TAH KUKVENI – ANCESTRAL FOOTPRINTS OF THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT

Vermilion Cliffs National Monument

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MARBLE CANYON

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GRAY MOUNTAIN



Although there is still more work to do, we will sleep easier tonight knowing that our water, sacred sites, and plant medicines are more protected, and that our ancestors' tears are finally tears of happiness.

Thomas Siyuja Sr., Chairman, Havasupai Tribe

Navajo Nation

917,618

acres of federal lands on the north and south rims of the Grand Canyon are now permanently protected



Thank you, President Biden for listening to the voices of our indigenous people and finally protecting our ancestral homeland ... Our land will now be preserved, and our sacred areas and sites protected. Ai Yuk, Thank you.

Corrina Bow, Chairwoman, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah



Area Enlarged

Arizona

- Monument Boundary
- Tribal Lands
- Grand Canyon National Park
- Wilderness Areas
- Other National Monuments

SUPPORTING NATIVE ENTREPRENEURS AND ARTISTS AT THE GRAND CANYON

Following the success of last year’s inaugural event, we have been planning and organizing the second Emergence Intertribal Economic Summit to be held again at the South Rim in Grand Canyon National Park. This unique event connects Native entrepreneurs and artists, National Park Service staff, tourism professionals, thought leaders, and other stakeholders to explore pathways for Indigenous business owners to participate in and benefit from the park’s booming tourism economy. We have worked closely with our partners this year to ensure another three-day event that is filled with hands-on workshops, field tours, and meaningful activities for the more than 75 registered attendees—all with the goal of mapping a more inclusive, equitable, and culturally aligned local economy.

Emergence includes participants from over

10 tribes and

30 organizations



Grand Canyon Trust Just Transition Manager Amber Benally facilitates a workshop at the inaugural Emergence Intertribal Economic Summit. JAMIE ARVISO



In a related effort to increase economic opportunities in the region, we organized a Native artists' market in Tusayan in July featuring 32 Indigenous artists with ties to the Grand Canyon. Several hundred people attended this free event that showcased handmade art, jewelry, pottery, and other goods, and included several traditional performances. The market's success underscored the importance of expanding economic opportunities for members of the 11 affiliated tribes at Grand Canyon National Park.

Nearly **600** people attended
the Native artists' market



ABOVE: Silversmith Tom Yazzie displays his jewelry for sale at the Native artists' market. RAYMOND CHEE

BELOW: 2023 Grand Canyon Trust interns Nizhoni Tallas (left) and Meranden Numkena (center) with Grand Canyon Trust Grand Canyon Manager Jack Pongyesva at the Native artists' market they helped to plan. RAYMOND CHEE

SAFEGUARDING THE COLORADO RIVER

The Colorado River is **1,450** miles long

travels through **30** tribal nations

supplies water to **40** million people

In May, the Lower Colorado River Basin states reached a deal to reduce their water consumption by 13 percent over the next three years. It is no secret that the Colorado River, the lifeblood of the West, is experiencing some of the driest conditions in 1,200 years. As demand continues to outpace supply, new forward-thinking policies are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the river and the communities it supports.

Last year, the Grand Canyon Trust made a significant investment to deepen its water advocacy efforts to ensure that flows through the Grand Canyon and other key places on the plateau are prioritized in water management decisions that will impact them for the foreseeable future. Under the leadership of our expert staff, we are engaging with decision-makers and helping shape innovative policy solutions.



To this end, we are working with members of Congress on Colorado River issues and have already met with the Washington D.C. offices of more than a dozen senators and representatives from Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico. Our work also includes developing strategic partnerships, conducting extensive research, sharing our expertise with federal agencies, taking legal action when necessary, and more.

Alongside our efforts on these broad policy issues, we are continuing to monitor, protect, and restore some of the plateau's other precious water sources, including ancient seeps and streams that support the region's incredible biodiversity.

The Colorado River, Grand Canyon National Park. TIM PETERSON

PROPOSED UTAH OIL SHALE PROJECT HALTED



LEFT: Green River oxbow in Canyonlands National Park. NEAL HERBERT, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ABOVE: The Green River below Flaming Gorge Dam in northern Utah. JOHN WILLIAMS

RIGHT: The White River winds through Enefit's proposed oil shale corridor in Utah's Uinta Basin. ECOFLIGHT

For more than a decade, the Grand Canyon Trust has steadfastly opposed the nation's first commercial-scale oil shale mine and processing plant slated for Utah's Uinta Basin by the Estonian company Enefit. As planned, the incredibly thirsty project would have drained nearly 10 million gallons of water per day from the Green River, a tributary of the Colorado River. It would also have strip-mined hundreds of millions of tons of oil shale rock and churned out more than 18 million barrels of synthetic crude oil every year for about 30 years, all with carbon emissions up to 75 percent higher than conventional oil.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Enefit's oil shale project likely would have significantly harmed human health and the environment.

The Trust recently finalized a settlement agreement to resolve an administrative protest that we filed in 2021 before the Utah Division of Water Rights challenging Deseret Power's decision to provide Enefit with water for the project. Likely owing in part to our legal effort, Enefit let go of its federal oil shale lease in August. While we are still working to prevent Enefit from operating on the company's adjacent private lands, this marks the end of the federal oil shale leasing program, as Enefit was the last company holding a lease.

Additionally, the settlement agreement ensures that neither Deseret Power nor any other entity can use the water right for fossil fuel development—a significant win for the Colorado Plateau.

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a vast, rugged canyon. The canyon walls are characterized by distinct horizontal geological layers in shades of tan, brown, and grey. The river flows through the center of the canyon, surrounded by some green vegetation. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

Over the next **30** years, Enfit's oil shale project would have:

produced more than **547** million barrels of oil and

consumed more than **100** billion gallons of water

A NEW SPACE FOR CHANGE MAKERS

On June 16, 2023, we celebrated the grand opening of Change Labs' newly built 1,400-square-foot facility in Tuba City, on the Navajo Nation. The state-of-the-art building offers business workshops, coaching, and space for Native entrepreneurs to build community. The ribbon cutting was the culmination of a decade-long initiative that began as a Native American business incubator at the Grand Canyon Trust—because our work to safeguard the region's natural and cultural resources goes hand in hand with creating a more sustainable and locally driven economy.

“

By cutting the ribbon on this space, Change Labs is saying that we are here as a Native resource led by Native people for Native people.

Jessica Stago, Change Labs co-founder



The Colorado Plateau has endured over a century of intense resource extraction by distant corporations that exploited both the region’s natural resources and its people. A Just Transition is the process of shifting power back to those who have been disenfranchised, and there are myriad ways to accomplish it. Strengthening tribal economies by growing small businesses is a key strategy. Collaboration remains strong between the Trust and Change Labs—now an independent Native-led 501(c)(3)—and together we have graduated more than 50 Native startups from the incubator program so far.

The future is bright in the hands of the Native change makers who are forging a new regional economy, one business at a time. Visit nativestartup.org for more information or to get involved.



ABOVE (Left to Right): Change Labs Co-Founder Natasha Hale interviews fellow co-founders Heather Fleming, now executive director of Change Labs and Jessica Stago, Change Labs director of business incubation about the Change Labs story following the ribbon cutting.

ABOVE: Change Labs' grand opening event. WENDY HOWELL, NAVAJO-HOPI OBSERVER

BELOW: Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, Change Labs' first board chair, speaks at the grand opening of Change Labs. WENDY HOWELL, NAVAJO-HOPI OBSERVER



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



For the Volunteer Program at the Grand Canyon Trust, 2023 was filled with hands-on field projects, monitoring trips, and community events. In all, nearly 250 individuals dedicated their time and labor to protecting and restoring landscapes in northern Arizona and southern Utah. Our 24th field season projects included removing invasive species and planting native seeds, restoring stream beds and meadows, building fences around fragile wetlands, monitoring declining pinyon jay populations, and many other activities that build on the Trust's long-term conservation efforts. The program also continues to explore creative ways of incorporating the principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity, including reducing barriers to trip participation and building community through educational events.

TOP: Volunteers launch an artificial island with native plantings into a lake for bird habitat at Johnson Lakes Canyon. AUDREY KRUSE

ABOVE: Volunteers take a break while building a fence around a wetland to protect it from cattle in the La Sal Mountains. LENA BAIN

2,365 volunteer hours donated

RISING LEADERS PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



From internships to leadership training, the Grand Canyon Trust's Rising Leaders Program mobilizes young people across the Colorado Plateau to take action on environmental and social justice issues. Highlights from its eighth year include the second annual Grand Canyon Regional Intertribal Intergenerational Stewardship Expedition (RIISE) down the Colorado River and a 10-day intensive leadership workshop, called LeaderShift, focused on a Just Transition for Navajo and Hopi communities. 2023 was also our largest internship program to date, with five promising young leaders who helped to advance the Trust's work while growing their own skills and experience.



My internship with the Trust deepened my knowledge of the Colorado Plateau, taught me how to effectively interact with public land agencies, and gave me practical tools that will be used in service to my greater ecological community.

Kaya McAlister, 2023 intern



5 summer interns

8 LeaderShift participants

18 RIISE participants

LEFT: LeaderShift participants learn about the impacts of coal mining on the Black Mesa community of the Navajo Nation. AUDREY KRUSE ABOVE: LeaderShift participants explore Mystical Antelope Canyon on the Navajo Nation, near Page, Arizona. DANYA GOREL

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...
Tom Sisk, PhD, Senior Science Advisor



This monumental decision honors our integral role in the conservation process, amplifies Native voices, and protects these sacred homelands for generations yet to experience them.

Fawn Sharp, President, National Congress of American Indians commenting on the new Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument



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SCAN TO DONATE





Grand Canyon Trust volunteers enjoy a break from field work in the La Sal Mountains. LENA BAIN

