GRAND CANYON TRUST *COLORADO PLATEAU*

Advocate

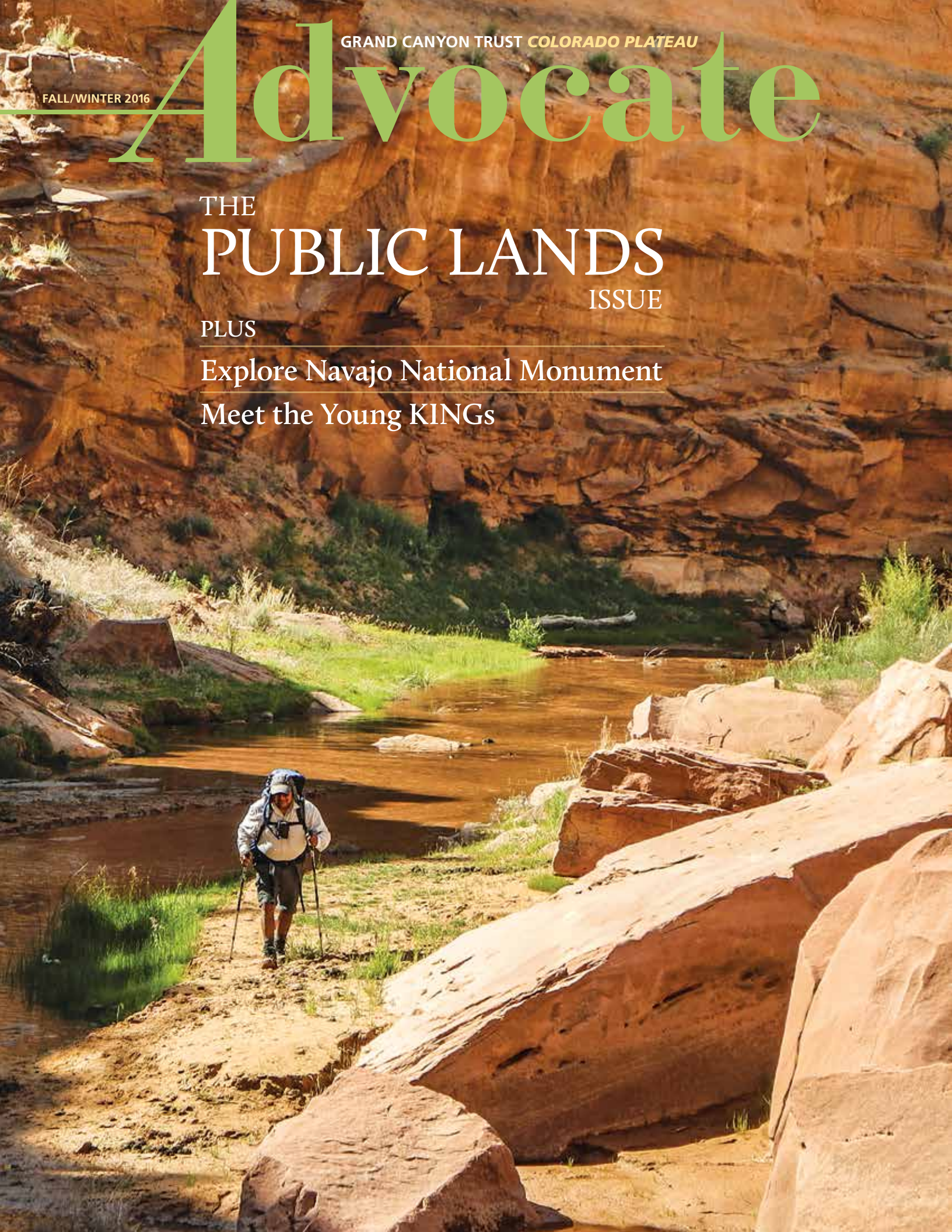
FALL/WINTER 2016

THE PUBLIC LANDS ISSUE

PLUS

Explore Navajo National Monument

Meet the Young KINGs



LETTER from the Board Chair
STEVE MARTIN

Public lands have shaped this country and our view of who we are as Americans. They have benefited each of us—ecologically, economically, recreationally, and spiritually. Increasing population and opportunity for travel have intensified the pressure we are imposing on these places. Current levels of protection are quickly becoming inadequate to preserve these lands while meeting the demands of visitation and use.

We have entered an era of rediscovery of public lands that offers great opportunities for citizens and the Grand Canyon Trust to make a lasting difference. Public lands on the Colorado Plateau encompass some of the most beautiful, inspiring, wild, and threatened places in the world. These lands include not only national parks, but also areas managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service.

The public lands of the Colorado Plateau are held in trust for the people of the United States. Inherent in the mission statements of the agencies responsible for our public lands is the mandate to preserve the lands' values for the benefit of present and future generations.

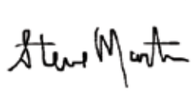
Every few generations, we have transformed how we view, value, and use these lands. Over the last 200 years, these lands have been used to settle the West, fuel industry and agriculture, accommodate timber, mining, and grazing, and form national parks. These are all valid pursuits that should continue where appropriate. But it's time once again to reassess how we protect and use public lands before key elements of them are lost.

People from around the United States and the world visit the Colorado Plateau to enjoy its natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational features. These lands are also extremely important to the future of Native American tribes. Current levels of visitation have made it clear that the proportion of lands set aside is too small, placing too much pressure on existing parks and monuments. The greatest need is to increase the percentage of lands designated for recreation, inspiration, protection of tribal values, and tourism.

Two-thirds of all lands once held by the federal government have been distributed and are no longer in the public trust. Some believe that the remaining lands should be similarly allocated. But that era of distribution is in the past. The federal government still holds about 500 million acres of land not in national parks and monuments. Protecting cultural, natural, and recreational values on even an additional 10 percent of these remaining lands could greatly enhance the legacy that we leave for future generations.

And we cannot merely increase the protection and hope for the best. We must also ensure that agencies have the resources and oversight necessary to accomplish this expanded conservation mission.

As citizens who value these lands and believe in the need to safeguard them for the future, we need to work together and act now.



ON THE COVER
Merv Yoyetewa en route to Kawestima. Read the interview with Merv on page 30 of this issue.
ELLEN HEYN

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.

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contents

CURATOR or LANDLORD?

Veterans show support for the proposed Bears Ears National Monument outside a public listening session with Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and other Obama administration officials in Bluff, Utah on July 16, 2016. Public lands in the Bears Ears region are home to more than 100,000 cultural and archaeological sites, and, despite pockets of fierce opposition, polling shows that most Utahns favor protecting the area as a national monument. BLAKE MCCORD

The Art and Economics of America's Public Lands

By Felicity Barringer

For many Americans, public lands have one overriding synonym: parks. And parks have had a broad cultural embrace, for 150 years or more, as places where the natural world forms a bond with the individual. As these bonds proliferate, the citizenry feels a special kinship to the landscape. When it comes to caring for parks, the government's job is akin to a museum curator's: assembling and caring for natural works of art.

But this view is alien to another group of people that radiates out around the Four Corners area: out west to Nevada, north to Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, and even Alaska. Public lands are part of the neighborhood here, and the wellspring of local livelihoods and cultures. Here, families ranch or cut timber. Here, the heavy machinery of big industry pulls oil, gas, and minerals from underneath the land. Here, the federal government is an absentee landlord. "No one's ever happy with their landlord," said David Hayes, twice the deputy secretary of the Interior Department.

The divergence in these two perspectives began at least a century ago, and today the distance between them has become a chasm. Increasingly over recent decades, rules for the use of public lands have changed as the calls for preserving both beauty and natural habitat have grown louder. When the federal government, seeking the chimera of sustainability, curtails historic uses, the cultures built around those uses rise up against their absentee landlord.

There are many places this can happen. "I think people in the East are stunned by the sheer volume and the percentage of the West [that] is in Western public lands," Hayes said. In states like Ohio, New York, Connecticut, Iowa, and Texas, less than 2 percent of the land is federally owned. In Nevada, the figure is almost 85 percent. In Utah, 64 percent. In Arizona, nearly 39 percent. No legislatures in New England have pushed for a state takeover of public lands, as Utah's has. In Maryland, there has been no armed standoff over grazing cattle on land without paying for it. And there has been no occupation of a wildlife refuge in Illinois.

Why the difference? The answer has its roots in the country's earliest history. Then, the biggest asset in the American treasury was land. The government's job was to see vast lands settled by Europeans and put in private hands to help the country and its economy grow as Native Americans were displaced. Officials determined that 640 acres, one square mile—called a "section"—could support a family farm, the Jeffersonian ideal. But at two dollars an acre, that was an investment out of many settlers' reach. In 1862, Congress passed the Homestead Act: The government could give the land to settlers who had worked it for some years and made improvements. "The intent was to democratize land ownership," said Greg Ablavsky, an assistant law professor at Stanford University.

1860s photographs of California's Yosemite Valley crystallized the attitudes of Americans, many far away in the East, about the value of leaving land alone.

There was a hitch; a system built for one climate didn't work in another. A section of land was sufficient for supporting a farming family in the East. West of the 100th meridian, where rain was a sometimes thing, it was not. The country had developed "a system set up for relatively wet areas," Ablavsky said. "It was much more poorly suited for dry areas. The section was inadequate to sustain a farm." There were fewer takers for Western land; the federal government kept what nobody wanted to buy.

But many people still wanted to use it. Bureaucracies developed to manage these prospectors, cattlemen, and sheepherders. And some tracts of land—a fraction of the expanse where Native Americans once farmed and hunted—became reservations for the original Americans, paltry remnants of the land they once commanded, now controlled by others. But whether the government is seen as a curator or a landlord, it manages all 640 million acres for everyone.

When public land was misused, the federal government intervened. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 was passed after ranchers realized they were engaged in a classic tragedy of the commons: Everybody grazed livestock hard and the land began to die. After 1934, ranchers had somewhat less control, but still had the major say in who used the land and how. Overall, from the Civil War through the New Deal and beyond, land-use policies favored the economic needs of the users.

In those same decades, a new public consciousness arose. Carleton Watkins' 1860s photographs of California's Yosemite Valley crystallized the attitudes of Americans, many far away in the East, about the value of leaving land alone. For them, the architecture of Yosemite, with its towering redwoods, was heart-stopping art. In 1862, Congress passed a bill to set this land aside. Two years later, President Lincoln signed the measure, putting Yosemite and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove out of reach of commercial exploitation; it became a California park. In 1872, land in Montana and Wyoming was set aside; Yellowstone became the first national park.

But some, like Pennsylvania-bred forester Gifford Pinchot, felt land could be sustained *and* useful. When San Francisco, needing water for a growing population, sought to dam the Tuolumne River, flooding Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy Valley, Pinchot supported the idea. In 1913, Congress agreed. San Francisco still gets its water from that dam; some environmentalists are still fighting to tear it down. The Forest Service, first headed by Pinchot in 1905, long lived by that dual ethic. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), cobbled together from the land sales and grazing agencies in 1946, considers its mandate "multiple use."

Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Councilwoman Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk addresses Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and other Obama administration officials in front of a large crowd at the public lands listening session in Bluff, Utah on July 16, 2016. PHOTOS BY BLAKE MCCORD

The public lands, for better or worse—how we treat them and what we expect from them—simply reflect our own evolving culture.

The National Park Service was established 100 years ago with a different purpose, reflecting the ethic of the legendary early environmentalist John Muir. The law creating the Park Service called on it to "conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein" and to leave the lands "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." That ethic still animates those who feel nature sustains the human soul, and those who want to protect the beasts and plants that are the essence of the natural world. In the 1960s and 1970s, this ethic infused the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

A similar spirit led to rules that opened or shut roads, kept old-growth forests from timber harvesting, required power plants to curtail their production if their pollution clouded the views in national parks, and took the health of salmon runs into account when licensing dams. Such rules gradually changed public lands policy. Nowadays, the government often acts as a curator—think of how President Bill Clinton turned 1.8 million acres of southeastern Utah into the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in 1996. But even though land use, particularly widespread grazing, in the monument is little changed from 25 years ago, some locals can find such designations meddlesome and unnecessary at best, and a hostile attack at worst.

In a state like Utah, said Robert H. Nelson, a former high-ranking Interior Department policy analyst, "they feel that national land management is heavily influenced by an environmental movement that doesn't have the economic values of the West at heart." Nelson, now at the University of Maryland, added that the federal court system has become another major force "strongly in favor of environmental values." Some people in the West, he said, "feel their ability to control the use of their lands is being taken away."

That was the case in the Pacific Northwest in 1992 when two federal court decisions, one involving the Forest Service and one the BLM, temporarily put 24 million acres with old-growth forest off-limits to harvesting, to help preserve the northern spotted owl. In the end, a federal plan accepted by the courts put 80 percent of old-growth forests off-limits.

Utah has been more aggressive than any other state in challenging federal control—indeed, the state is girding for a legal challenge to federal ownership. By contrast, Colorado just declared a "Public Lands Day," celebrating the ways public lands enrich communities that serve hikers, campers, skiers, and kayakers reveling in nature.

Even as recreation plays a bigger and bigger role in the economy of public lands, resistance to controls on local activities and recreation choices, like all-terrain vehicles, becomes virulent. Restrictions "are challenges to the manhood of the West," said J. Austin Burke, a former policy specialist at the Interior Department.

"The public lands, for better or worse—how we treat them and what we expect from them—simply reflect our own evolving culture," said William C. Tweed, a Park Service veteran. That culture, he added, must evolve faster to accommodate a changing climate. These changes can both destroy nature's art—California red fir trees and lodgepole pines are dying by the score in Kings Canyon and Sequoia national parks—and its economics—fighting wildfires consumes an ever-increasing share of the Forest Service's budget.

The arc of the current evolution will only be clear years from now. As President Obama told podcast host Marc Maron in 2015, "The trajectory of progress always happens in fits and starts. And you've got big legacy systems that you have to wrestle with. And you have to balance what you want and where you're going with what is and what has been."

Felicity Barringer spent more than a decade covering environmental issues for The New York Times before retiring in 2014.

Young KINGs of Climate

MARCEL GAZTAMBIDE

How KEEP IT IN THE GROUND is Shaping the Environmental Movement

By Kate Savage

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell calls it "naïve." Obama's top science adviser says it's "unrealistic." Meanwhile, the movement to "keep it in the ground" leaps from the radical fringe to congressional bill and campaign talking point.

KEEP IT IN THE GROUND (abbreviated as KING) is one well-researched demand: Stop leasing federal land to fossil fuel extractors. Those companies will use leases they already own for decades, releasing massive amounts of carbon. To stop runaway climate change, the rest must remain underground.

But more than a demand, KING is a movement. It's a vibrant culture of resistance made of hopes deeper than talking points, and powered by a rare resource of the remote lease tracts of the West: love of land.

Some of the best young KING organizers in Utah recently showed me how this movement is shaping the way we fight climate catastrophe. Around a campfire on the Tavaputs Plateau, Cali Bulmash sings to the land around us:

'Cause you are
A heaven on earth
Where life bursts
From the nooks and crannies
Hidden in your curves

It's a full-fledged valentine to land my Mormon ancestors called "one vast contiguity of waste and measurably valueless," and which the environmental impact statement for the adjacent tar sands mine insists has "lower scenic value." This is, asserted an oil and gas man, "where God just stuck dirt to keep the earth from falling apart."

But Bulmash, a vivacious spoken-word poet from New Jersey and new member of Utah's KING campaign, has fallen in love. She says this is why she risked arrest here last June, when she and 40 others built a permaculture berm directly on the tar sands strip mine, planting the denuded land with native grasses and sagebrush. Arresting officers appeared genuinely perplexed by the busy gardeners singing this movement's anthem:

People gonna rise like the water
Gonna calm this crisis down.
I hear the voice of my great-granddaughter
Saying keep it in the ground.

Bulmash sang these same words with me in May, while disrupting a Bureau of Land Management auction in Salt Lake City, where fossil fuel companies bid on vast tracts of public land. The police who dragged us away didn't seem to fully appreciate our four-part harmony.

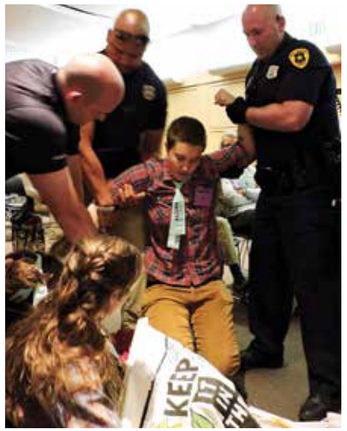
Bulmash's storyline traces an arc familiar to many KING activists. For years we have studied climate change and felt gut-corroding anxiety over our future. What finally moves us to action is connection to a place.

This is KING's power: to take abstract worry over the threat of climate change and plant it in land. The protests in cities and at land auctions are rooted in love for a place threatened by new development. Keep It in the Ground grounds us, and in turn builds friendships, as strangers bond over shared affection.

"It gets into your blood to be out here," says Melanie Martin, a soft-spoken writer who has supported climate justice efforts in the region for years. "It's like that book 'Wisdom Sits in Places'—this place holds stories, and shared stories connect me to others. The scar of a strip mine is a punch in the gut," Martin admits. Her walks on the plateau are interrupted by the rumble of machinery, "but at the same time I'm aware of all the life around me," she says. "There is still so much to be protected. I'm thinking of everyone downstream, and I'm thinking of climate change. But honestly the most power comes from the land itself."

The conservation movement has long known this: To move others to act boldly in defense of land, you've got to get bodies out in it. But conservationists typically focus on "special" land—charismatic cliffs and views—which can become a save-this, drill-that realpolitik that allows "sacrifice zones." When KING links land to climate, it takes a radical step: The atmosphere doesn't care whether carbon came from underneath a natural arch or a cow-studded plot of "low scenic value." KING challenges us to love—and defend—all places.

KING protesters at a public lands oil and gas auction in Salt Lake City, Utah on May 17, 2016.
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

The conservation movement has long known this: To move others to act boldly in defense of land, you've got to get bodies out in it.

It's a wild ambition, but it also builds solidarity. "It means we can't throw anyone under the bus," says experienced KING organizer Lauren Wood. "And it resonates with people, because everyone has their own place. Their own paradise."

The stance against sacrifice zones might be opening paths through a prickly territory often avoided by environmentalists: a history of racism and indigenous genocide. When I asked young organizers about leaders, not one mentioned the heads of KING-rallying NGOs. Though they're grateful for this institutional support, they named instead the frontline communities who have practiced land defense for centuries.

One mentor mentioned is Nathan Manuel of the Tohono O'odham Nation, who told me calmly over lunch, "let's look at colonization, sterilization, genocide. We've had no choice but to be land defenders." Manuel's ancestral territories in the Sonoran Desert are cut in two by an imaginary line called the border. He insists that the violence of the border is tied to abuse of the land: "What happens to the land happens to the community, and vice versa." He explains part of resistance is "a deep-hearted connection to Mother Earth and her people."

Henia Belalia, a French-Algerian land defender, works tirelessly against extraction throughout the Southwest. When you compliment people around here on their hard work, they're inclined to say, "Well sure, but I'm no Henia." Belalia tells me, "It's the same systems that are destroying the land here, incarcerating people of color and keeping them under the constant threat of violence. We can't win without doing some deep intersectional organizing."

Lauren Wood agrees: "We need to have an anti-colonial perspective. This work means decolonizing the way we perceive public land. It sounds radical, but we must acknowledge that this is stolen land, and we could ruin it forever."

These connections mean hard conversations and worries of mistakes for white organizers—and also losing the ability to facilely sing "this land is my land"—but the connections forge a humility that radically shapes the movement. Frontline land defenders often demand space for ceremony and prayer, and the entire movement finds itself re-centering in music, art, and deep healing work. An old word settles back into our vocabulary: "We desperately need *sacred* places," says Melanie Martin. "That's what being out here does—it becomes sacred to you."

I was walking with Bulmash in my favorite shady valley below the tar sands mine when she broke the bad news: This place could become "fill." The rubble scraped from the mine will end up here. I had known before then that the mine was wrong, but now an alarm sounded inside me. This quiet aspen grove where I'd sat and laughed with people I love, where I'd watched woodpeckers and mule deer, would be buried in rubble?

If "naïve" means lacking experience, those who haven't sat in this aspen grove, given it offerings and prayers, or crooned it a love song, are naïve. Those who haven't felt this land's reality are "unrealistic."

The heart roots down. The KING movement is anchored and unbudging: Keep it in the (sacred, much-beloved) ground.

Kate Savage grew up in the Mojave Desert and now writes and organizes with Wasatch Rising Tide and Showing Up for Racial Justice in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Volunteer Spotlight

Johanna Dushlek, 72

PROFESSION: Retired Radiologic Technician/Medical Assistant

VOLUNTEER ROLE: Wildlife Photo Reviewer

HOMETOWN: Born in Roswell, NM; lives in Saratoga Springs, NY

VOLUNTEER SINCE: 2015

TOTAL HOURS DONATED: 105

Why I Volunteer with the Grand Canyon Trust

At 72 years young, I've traveled the world and seen some wondrous sights, but I have not yet visited the Grand Canyon. After seeing an exceptionally beautiful photo of the canyon online, I clicked a link and discovered stories of citizen scientists working to preserve and protect the region and its flora and fauna. I emailed the Trust asking if I could possibly volunteer from 2,447 miles away, and they said yes! By volunteering from my computer at home in New York, I have now experienced the Grand Canyon region in a way that no one could have imagined 60 years ago.

My Long-Distance Volunteer Project

I scan photos from the wildlife cameras set up at springs on the North Rim Ranches and make notes of what I see. It's a privilege that very few people get. Even when no animals are noted, I love being up close and personal with these places through the eye of the camera, watching a small plant grow larger and flower and seeing the light change on the canyon walls from sunrise to sunset. I like to tell people it's akin to having my own personal time machine!

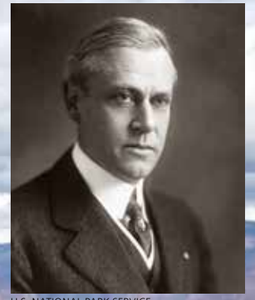
Favorite Volunteer Moment

As I was scrolling through photos from one of the camera sites, a beautiful bobcat appeared in the distance. It came in and out of view. Suddenly, a strange image appeared. As usual, I sat back from my laptop and refocused my eyes. I was ready to note the image as an unknown, but then I realized it was the huge eye of the bobcat looking directly into the lens of the camera. I actually jumped back, and then laughed. It took me a minute to remember that I was safe at home, sitting in my chair!

Find YOUR next volunteer project at
grandcanyontrust.org/volunteer

Stephen Mather's SOAPBOX

By Don Lago



U.S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

CERISSA HOGLANDER

The 100th anniversary of the National Park Service has generated many commemorations—indeed, many self-congratulations. And rightly so. The rim of the Grand Canyon might have consisted of miles of mansions and security gates, but instead it is open to all Americans and the world. Every year millions of foreigners, who might disapprove of America for our politics or our peanut butter, come to the national parks and go home deeply impressed by not just their wild beauty, but by their democratic values. Our best lands have brought out the best in our ideals.

Yet, in one respect, the national parks were an improbable development. Perhaps more than any other nation in world history, America has been defined and driven by a national mythos and mission of wilderness conquest. Colonists arriving on the Atlantic coast in the 1600s saw a vast continent of inexhaustible resources, of farmland, forests, minerals, wildlife, and water. Refugees fleeing Europe for religious reasons soon perceived the American continent as a God-given gift that would reward righteousness with prosperity. At the same time, the unfolding era of technological invention would give Americans unprecedented tools for conquering nature. In the 1740s, Peter Kalm, a student of Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus, toured America as an environmental Tocqueville and was appalled by its already-obvious culture of greed and waste; he saw that Swedish emigrants, who had settled on the Delaware River a century before, had been corrupted into abandoning their old nature-humble ways and were using timber and fish as if they were endless. This was long before America had the government or corporations or industrialism that today's ideologies tend to blame for all our troubles. Environmental destruction has deep cultural momentum. Our frontier experience also generated strong social norms, including individualism, rootlessness, and violence, that long ago became dysfunctional, but seem unyielding.

American industrialist Stephen Mather made a fortune in borax mining. He later became the first director of the National Park Service.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

It was precisely because this frontier juggernaut was so powerful that it generated a powerful and unique response. Early on, this reaction was feeble and dismissed as eccentric—silly Thoreau nagging his neighbors for enjoying material success. But half a century later, with the Gilded Age devouring nature, Americans who loved nature were forced to confront our national values, especially Americans who loved both nature and our frontier mythos. Teddy Roosevelt was enthralled with the heroic cowboy/hunter persona and pursued it all his life. Young Stephen Mather, a native Californian working in advertising, harnessed the American mythic imagination by inventing the image of the 20-mule team for selling Death Valley borax soap. Yet both men also grew up loving nature, and both were distressed by the destruction marching around them. Wrestling mightily with their consciences, Roosevelt and Mather decided that America's frontier mythos needed to be challenged and subdued. Yet they were up against a force far more powerful than themselves, more powerful than a president. Roosevelt didn't become president because Americans were clamoring for conservation, but only as an accident of history—the assassination of President McKinley. If William McKinley had remained president, the Gilded Age would have continued steamrolling the modest conservation movement. When Stephen Mather became head of the National Park Service, he had a tiny staff and budget and had to fall back on Wild West mythos to promote not borax soap but Death Valley itself, and other landscapes.

Most national parks and other public lands were created in an era when Americans felt they could have both prosperity and great scenery for their vacations. As confidence in prosperity erodes, so may support for public lands.

Decades later, Ronald Reagan would host TV's "Death Valley Days" and enthusiastically enlist in Mather's Wild West iconography and sell lots of soap, but he never enlisted in Mather's change of heart. Reagan got elected president by reassuring Americans that the frontier was still alive and well, that our resources were still unlimited, that individualism and guns were healthy, and that if American prosperity was not functioning as national myth had always promised, it wasn't because it had become invalid but because something was interfering with it, such as government regulation. If only we returned to 1870, everything would be great again. The power of the frontier myth means that Americans, in a far larger percentage than any other Western nation, reject the concept of global climate change, which simply does not fit into our national belief that God had arranged nature and history to serve American prosperity. Three decades after Reagan, the frontier myth has lost much of Reagan's easy confidence and become more frustrated, more crude, angry, and paranoid, but it remains powerful enough to steer our destiny.

In the midst of celebrating our national parks, which might seem as solid and ancient as canyon cliffs, we should remind ourselves that our parks and other public lands are human institutions, created out of conflict. For half a century after Yellowstone became the first national park, Arizonans fought to prevent the Grand Canyon from becoming a park, out of deeper loyalty to the belief that the land was made to be exploited for wealth. Most national parks and other public lands were created in an era when Americans felt they could have both prosperity and great scenery for their vacations. As confidence in prosperity erodes, so may support for public lands. While national parks are unlikely to be abolished or contracted, their budgets easily can be. Even ancient cliffs sometimes collapse.

By some measures, we have to wonder how much progress we have made. Stephen Mather and his successors, in trying to define the values of the Park Service, ruled out building a tramway to the bottom of the canyon—too

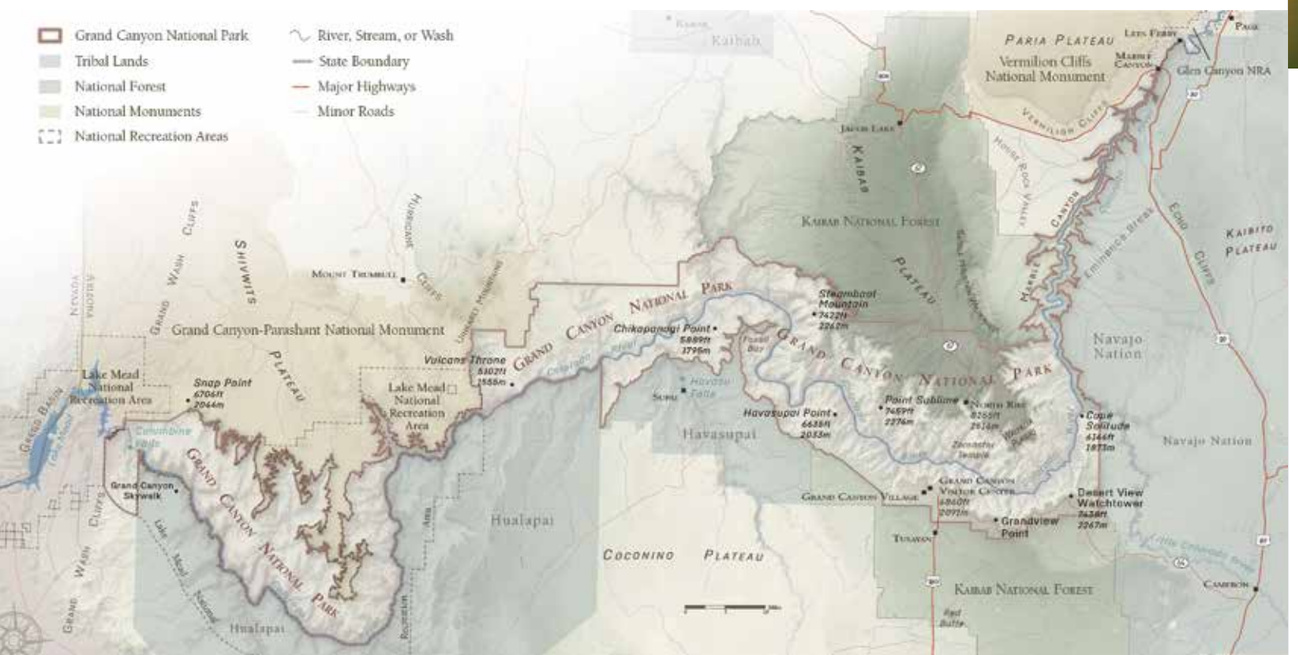
unnatural. A century later, we are battling over just such a tramway. Mather worked relentlessly to stop mining inside national parks, but park boundaries were never drawn up with regard to groundwater or radioactive contamination of it. Mather was passionately opposed to the idea of air tours over national parks, but they have become a routine part of park skies. When Teddy Roosevelt declared "leave it as it is," he meant not building any lodges or other tourist facilities inside parks. But Mather was so desperate to draw voters to the parks and please them that the Park Service spent its first half-century bulldozing forests and paving wildlife habitat, and it has spent the last half-century uncomfortably trying to back out of its own trap, and it did not set a high standard for discouraging development near park boundaries. Roosevelt and Mather saw a wild Colorado River, but today it's an overtaxed water supply for grossly misplaced cities. As national mythology discourages action over global climate change, park boundaries won't stop massive ecosystem erosion.

AMY S. MARTIN

Celebration does not mean relaxation.

Don Lago is the author of "Grand Canyon: A History of a Natural Wonder and National Park" from the University of Nevada Press.

Stephen Mather and his successors, in trying to define the values of the Park Service, ruled out building a tramway to the bottom of the canyon—too unnatural. A century later, we are battling over just such a tramway.



In LOVE with the WILD

By Bill Hedden

ELLEN MORRIS BISHOP

I want to reach far back into time, because, of course, the landscapes of the Colorado Plateau have stories stretching back forever.

THEIR MODERN INCARNATION as America's public lands is a relatively new status resulting from a fascinating, sometimes awful story that is usually neglected to our great impoverishment. So, let me arbitrarily enter that great story at the Battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836. It was there that Sam Houston's army of Texans won the decisive battle of the Texas Revolution, defeating Santa Anna's Mexican army in just 18 minutes. When Santa Anna signed a peace treaty three weeks later, the short-lived Republic of Texas became an independent country claiming disputed title to 390,000 square miles of territory carved out of the Republic of Mexico all the way up through western Colorado to the Wyoming border.

We don't talk much about the complex history of Spanish exploration and conquest in America. How many know that the same García López de Cárdenas, who visited the south rim of the Grand Canyon in 1540 with Hopi guides, was later convicted of

Comb Ridge and Cedar Mesa, Bears Ears Cultural Landscape, Utah. TIM PETERSON

war crimes for his brutal role that winter in the Tiguex War against the Tiwa people along the Río Grande? It was the earliest named conflict between Europeans and indigenous people in America, and predated the Declaration of Independence by a gulf of time equivalent to the one that has passed since our country was founded.

Much later, but still very early in the West, in 1765, the party of Juan María Antonia Rivera became the first Europeans to see the Colorado River in Utah, more than a century before the remarkable Mormon San Juan Expedition entered that territory by crossing Glen Canyon at the Hole in the Rock. Rivera recorded in his journal an exploration of the canyons upstream from Moab, during which they spent a night camped on or near the land that claims me as its caretaker 200 years later. These histories offer fascinating insights about our place in the world, but the stories are rarely told of the Hispanic explorers and settlers, or of blacks, whose status as slave or free was the principal question at issue when the Republic of Texas was admitted as a state in 1848.

It is time we begin to more actively recognize the roles played by diverse peoples in the making of this country. The public lands are an ideal place to do it, since they have been a key part of our democratic experiment at least since the first Homestead Act in 1862. This goes beyond just historical understanding of how we came to be the people we are; we need to invite the widest spectrum of Americans into the enjoyment of our public lands and into the conversation about how we want to manage our shared inheritance in the future.

President Obama has made a fine start in broadening our view with the designation of places like the César Chávez and the San Gabriel Mountains national monuments. If our public lands don't continue to evolve along with our society, they risk becoming irrelevant, bereft of defenders just when they need them most.

And this brings me back to the Tiwa people, whose pueblos were attacked by Coronado's men, or to the Hopi who guided Cárdenas to the Grand Canyon and stood with the violent and otherworldly conquistador on the East Rim within sight of the ancient Hopi Salt Trail, pretending that they didn't know a way down into the sacred abyss. They and many other indigenous peoples are still among us, having endured genocide, smallpox, relocation, forced acculturation, and other horrors too numerous to recount. These peoples have found ways to live within the terms imposed by this continent for thousands of years, based on a relationship of reciprocity with the world, rather than dominion. What should be their role in determining the management of the lands they once inhabited? Might we not have some urgent need of their wisdom? It is long past time to bring Native Americans formally into the process of managing the lands where they lived, where their ancestors are buried, and where they still gather medicines and sustenance and visit sacred sites.

Congress passed the Antiquities Act in 1906, just 40 years after the atrocities and forced deportations of the Navajo Long Walk and a mere 16 years after the massacre at Wounded Knee. By the time Congress took action, the indigenous population of America had been reduced by 97 percent. Yet the purpose of the 1906 law was to protect the prehistoric ruins and artifacts rather than the living victims of this campaign of genocide. When modern Indians talk about being invisible, this is what they mean. In the entire 110-year history of the Antiquities Act, there has never been a Native American campaign for a national monument, until now.

Today, the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Uintah and Ouray Ute, and Ute Mountain Ute tribes have formally united to secure a presidential proclamation establishing a 1.9 million acre Bears Ears National Monument. The coalition's vision for Bears Ears also offers a chance for a profound kind of healing —of past injustices, of the land, and of relations among all people—native and non-native alike.

From the idea of healing, let me shift slightly to close with a thought about beauty.

Beauty seems purposely woven into the fabric of our world and is not as frail as it seems. Goethe said, "The beautiful is a manifestation of secret laws of Nature, which, but for this appearance, had been forever concealed from us." Every system scientists probe turns out to be vastly more intelligent, adaptive, and interrelated than they originally supposed—never the reverse. Reciprocity is often more important than Darwin's competition.

Perhaps beauty is a gift that might be our best guide to dealing with dark times. I have argued for Aldo Leopold's literal truth that selecting the more beautiful option is the best guide to land management decisions. Do you not find it heartening that redressing wrongs between peoples might kindle a synthesis of modern and ancient wisdom that could yield critical missing pieces to the riddle of how we should live? Isn't it humbling to see that restraint and forbearance in our use of the natural resources we never made and cannot replace might lead us to a more prosperous future? I am overwhelmed with gratitude when I fully see the glory of the other creatures and the unfathomable depth of the creation we share, and believe with all my being that our best path into the future is through a compassionate, giving love affair with all of creation.

This piece is an excerpt adapted from Grand Canyon Trust Executive Director Bill Hedden's April 21, 2016 speech at the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy and the Environment at the University of Colorado Boulder College of Law. Read and watch the full speech at grandcanyontrust.org/advocatemag. The complete text will appear in the February 2017 issue of "The Colorado Natural Resources, Energy, and Environmental Law Review," Volume 28.

"A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit."

–D. Elton Trueblood

TIM PETERSON

The Proposed Bears Ears National Monument

Nadia Armajo sings the national anthem in Diné outside a public lands listening session with Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell in Bluff, Utah on July 16, 2016. BLAKE MCCORD

BLAKE MCCORD

Testament to a Great Conservation Law and the Resilience of Indian Tribes

By Charles Wilkinson

The Antiquities Act of 1906 is unusual in the circumstances of its creation, its brevity and clarity, and in the reach and force of its success. Now, President Obama is assessing whether to use this statute to create the proposed Bears Ears National Monument, a proposal that is not only unusual, but noteworthy in the ways it hews so precisely to the central, most heartfelt concerns of this great law.

At first, the news of a new kind of threat to federal and tribal interests traveled slowly. In 1888, Richard Wetherill came upon fabulous Cliff Palace in Mesa Verde. A rancher from Mancos, Colorado, he was taken aback by the obvious high quality of the pots and baskets he could see right out in the open. It quickly occurred to him that this could lead to a business far more lucrative than chasing cows.

By the mid-1890s, Wetherill and family members were shipping out tens of thousands of crates of antiquities to museums and collectors on both coasts and in between. Archaeologists, aspiring entrepreneurs, and Interior Department officials were taking notice. John Otis Brew, director of Harvard's Peabody Museum, called the Wetherill excavations "the most far-reaching event in Southwest archaeology history."

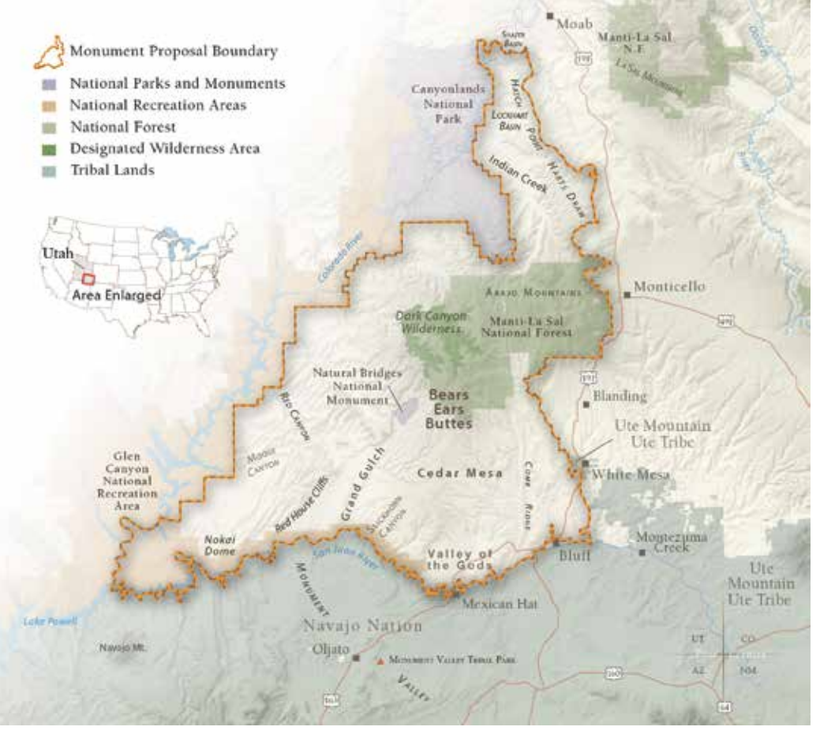
Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901 and launched the Progressive Era, which remains the most productive period for conservation in the history of America, and, for that matter, the world.

Roosevelt's Interior Department soon began working on antiquities legislation, calling in Edgar Lee Hewett, an outside anthropologist who knew and loved the Southwest, to do much of the drafting work. Hewett managed to come up with language that satisfied the various points of view as well as the unanimous conviction that something had to be done to protect these extraordinary treasures of long-ago societies. Most were located on federal public lands, so federal action was appropriate. By 1906, the bill had passed both houses.

There were three basic parts to the legislation. Scientists wishing to research would be required to obtain federal permits. Anyone who excavated, injured, or destroyed any object of antiquity would be subject to federal criminal prosecution.

The most significant provision, one that would change the world, granted to every president the authority to create national monuments. These decisions would be made by the president and the president alone—"in his discretion"—and there was no need for the chief executive to receive approval from, or even consult with, Congress or anyone else.

Hewett believed that the idea of allowing only "postage stamp" monuments to protect specific archaeological sites was too narrow. Instead, presidents would have leeway to decide the geographical limits of monuments so long as they were "confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected." Presidential proclamations were authorized to protect "objects of historic or scientific interest" located on the federal public lands. President Roosevelt signed the Antiquities Act into law on June 8, 1906.



At that moment, it was impossible to predict how significant this new law would be. After all, this Antiquities Act fit on just one page, and the key provisions concerning monument creation consisted of two sentences.

Two main problems stood out. The first was whether the act would allow large-landscape national monuments. Hewett had eliminated acre limitations—320 acres and 640 acres in previous drafts—so that the president wouldn't be severely constrained, but the chosen language still sounded restrictive, limiting the president, as it did, to monuments of the "smallest area compatible" with proper protection of the land. The second problem was what kind of land could be protected. The statutory term "objects of historic or scientific interest" sounded narrow and clinical. This could easily mean that presidents could not use the Antiquities Act to protect large, magnificent landscapes in the wide-open American West.

Do not underestimate Theodore Roosevelt.

TR, by miles the most dynamic conservationist president, was a whirlwind of activity. He decreed 140 million acres as national forest land, three-quarters of the current Forest Service system and about 6 percent of all land in the United States. He invented—with no statutory authority—the first national wildlife refuge and issued executive orders establishing 50 more. He pushed Congress for numerous national parks. And, with one bold stroke of his pen, Roosevelt transformed the Antiquities Act into a muscular force, one of the main cornerstones of American conservation law and policy.

Standing on the South Rim on January 11, 1908, TR proclaimed much of the Grand Canyon as a national monument. Now the words of the Antiquities Act had been given meaning. "Smallest area compatible." Does 800,000 acres give you a hint? Then Roosevelt and later presidents proceeded to create national monuments far larger than the first one, veritable "objects of historic or scientific interest." TR's words on that January day—"Let this great wonder of nature remain as it now is. Do nothing to mar its grandeur, sublimity and loveliness"—allow us to comprehend the full reach of the Antiquities Act. Ever since the Grand Canyon, presidents have created monuments because they are "wonders of nature." The Southwest has been especially lucky with monuments (many, like the Grand Canyon, now national parks) at Arches, Capitol Reef, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Grand Staircase-Escalante, and other places. Nationally, expansive monuments have been created in Alaska and numerous locations in the Lower 48, for example, Devils Tower, Badlands, Little Bighorn Battlefield, Jackson Hole, Lassen Peak, Giant Sequoia, and Mount St. Helens.

National monuments have often been challenged in court. Not a single challenge has been successful, with judges consistently emphasizing the breadth of presidential authority under the Antiquities Act. The decisive moment came in 1920, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Roosevelt's proclamation at the Grand Canyon.

The proposed Bears Ears National Monument, a landscape of 1.9 million acres, was homeland for many Southwestern tribes. In the mid-19th century, the Army force-marched tribal people out of the area and located them on reservations. But it was a place of so many homes, so many sacred sites, so much hunting and gathering, so many memories, that people continued to return.

Five tribes that have used the area since time immemorial—the Hopi, Navajo, Ute Mountain Ute, Uintah and Ouray Ute, and Zuni—formally organized the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition. After a great deal of work, on October 15, 2015, the coalition submitted a proposal to President Obama for the creation of a Bears Ears National Monument. This is the first time Indian tribes have led a proposal for a national monument.

From a conservation standpoint, this is glory country—a wonder of nature. The Bears Ears landscape holds exquisite, deep-cut canyons, arches and natural bridges, dramatic redrock formations large and small, long vistas, mountain meadows, broad mesas, and world-class climbing. Every bit the equal of Canyonlands and other storied parks and monuments, Bears Ears should have received protection long ago. Only the staunch Utah opposition to federal land set-asides has prevented it.

The Bears Ears area is a perfect fit for the Antiquities Act. It encompasses the kind of ancient villages, and the despoiling of them, that gave rise to this great statute. Bears Ears is still subject to the horrifying pot stealing and grave robbing that afflicted the area more than a century ago. National monument status will lead to more effective enforcement of the federal criminal laws.

The five coalition tribes have proposed that this new national monument be collaboratively managed by tribal and federal officials. No federal land unit has ever been managed in this fashion but this is the right time and occasion for it. Bears Ears is a perfect place for the healing that is a necessary salve to the intergenerational trauma visited upon tribes by the removal from their homelands, the damaging of their villages, theft of antiquities, and digging up and removal of human remains. Collaborative management will provide more environmentally sensitive land management and will improve the atmosphere for healing. Non-Indian people will also find the pristine, quiet, and inspiring setting of Bears Ears National Monument to be a welcoming place for their own healing, reflection, and prayers.

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell speaks with Bears Ears National Monument supporters.
PHOTOS BY BLAKE MCCORD

National monuments have often been challenged in court. Not a single challenge has been successful.

The tribes also envision the new national monument as a perfect place to study and practice traditional knowledge, the knowledge system growing out of their millennia of experience with the natural world and enriched by the intellectual precept of Native Americans that they are one with the natural world. The synthesis of Western science and traditional knowledge almost certainly will lead to improved land management, a phenomenon that can be carefully studied at the new national monument. Because of the increased interest in traditional knowledge in America and many other countries as well, the coalition tribes plan to establish a Bears Ears Traditional Knowledge Institute to document, study, and hold forums on traditional knowledge open to indigenous peoples and other interested citizens the world over.

The Bears Ears National Monument will rise up out of the historic thinking and presidential action that marked the adoption and implementation of the Antiquities Act of 1906. President Obama could find no better way to acknowledge the wrongs visited upon the tribes that made the law necessary and to move to even higher ground by paying high honor to the long history of the tribes of the Southwest as well as the modern revival that the tribes themselves have wrought. The result will be a luminous national monument that will be one of the most distinctive units within the entire United States public land system and that embodies America's best traditions and values.

University of Colorado Distinguished Professor and Moses Lasky Professor of Law Charles Wilkinson is the author of "Fire on the Plateau: Conquest and Endurance in the American Southwest."

Protesters rallied against the proposed Bears Ears National Monument outside a San Juan County Commission meeting on July 14, 2016, chanting "Leave it like it is" and "No national monument." TIM PETERSON

Living Together in Hard Country

Why the Federal Lands Takeover Movement Can't Be Ignored

By Ethan Aumack

Heavily armed, camouflage-wearing militants manning sniper posts and clamoring to bullhorn their anti-government innuendo. Wanton destruction of property. Calls to arms broadcast to militia around the country.

THE BUNDY clan's January takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Oregon was a scene I would have expected from another part of the world—a desperate, violent, and lawless one at that. Not here though. Surely not a refuge for pity's sake, along the banks of the Donner und Blitzen River I camped next to, fished in, and fell in love with as an eight-year-old boy.

I watched aghast for nearly a month as the Bundys held the refuge hostage. I listened to their rhetoric, overwrought descriptions of an oppressive federal government run amok, and their claims of federal public lands' constitutional illegitimacy. I heard their demands that the refuge should be transferred to Harney County control and their threats of violence should law enforcement attempt to remove them from the refuge.

Like many others, I was angry—more angry with each day the Bundys held the refuge hostage. Angry at the destruction of place and public property. Angry at the demand that these public lands and others be taken from us and given to a select few (and not, by the way, back to the Northern Paiute, from whom the land had originally been seized). And even angrier that this motley crew of ne'er-do-wells would have the temerity to demand change with AR-15 assault rifles.

We can take some small comfort that many of the takeover's instigators are now in prison. Unfortunately, their extreme actions weren't politically isolated. They are radical manifestations of a movement reminiscent of the Sagebrush Rebellion of the 1970s and 1980s that has gathered momentum over the past several years—one based on the assertion that counties and states can claim legitimate control and ownership over federal public lands.

All 11 Western states have considered or passed legislation supporting the transfer of federal public lands to local authorities.

The federal lands takeover movement we are in the midst of is widespread. All 11 Western states have considered or passed legislation supporting the transfer of federal public lands to local authorities. Pushed by groups like the American Lands Council, and sometimes funded with millions of taxpayer dollars, congressional representatives, state legislators, county commissioners, and others throughout the West continue to promise an imminent transfer of public lands.

This transfer will never happen. Constitutional and public lands scholars have time and time again reviewed the claims made by takeover advocates, and come to the same simple conclusion: The United States Constitution and the Supreme Court provide clear authority to the federal government to own and manage federal lands, and have done so for more than 200 years. Revolutions notwithstanding, they will do so for the next 200.

Some would argue that, given the apparent fruitlessness of the movement, we should ignore it—let it die its own death. We would do so, however, at our own peril. The movement has given voice and provided a rallying cry to individuals who feel disenfranchised from the federal government, and channeled their anger toward those responsible for stewarding more than 640 million acres of public lands. In the face of such anger, we increasingly see land managers managing from a place of fear—retracting and sometimes wholesale abandoning reasonable conservation policies and practices. Critical efforts to revise archaic grazing management plans have been shelved and hard-won collaborative solutions to contentious public lands challenges dismantled. Protective policies at the state and federal levels have been challenged and weakened piece by piece. This regression and retrenchment present a dire threat.

What, then, should a response to the public lands takeover movement look like?

First, we should remain loyal to the always beautiful, sometimes frustrating, and absolutely critical concept of lands owned by the American people, managed for the American people. Our public lands are a biological sanctuary, a place for physical and spiritual rejuvenation—open and often wild lands increasingly rare in this congested world. Especially in an era of daunting threats like climate change, the protections set out by laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act offer at least a modicum of restraint in the face of unfettered development. We should and will promote the concept of public lands on the ground, in the courts, and through the media to ensure their continued protection.

To mount an ethically grounded defense of public lands, though, we

Citizens strive—often through vigorous debate—to find a more perfect union of values and priorities. They don't hold our lands hostage at gunpoint, or with threatening rhetoric.

Four Forest Restoration Initiative stakeholders meet in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest to discuss restoring northern Arizona's ponderosa pine forests. 4FRI

need to clearly appreciate that many of these public lands claimed as property of the states are in fact the homelands and places of spiritual sustenance for numerous Native American tribes. Across the Colorado Plateau, a long-overdue movement to honor this heritage is underway as tribes work through the Bears Ears and Greater Grand Canyon Heritage national monument campaigns to ensure that tribal values, priorities, and knowledge shape management and decision-making. We applaud and will continue to strongly support these efforts and partner with tribes as they rightfully claim a central place in the ongoing public lands debate.

Balancing a wide range of values and interests is the unenviable task of federal public land managers. For some issues like mining and energy development, finding agreement amongst stakeholders is very difficult. Battles will be fought and decisions will be made, creating winners and losers. Too often, though, in the face of controversy, land managers give up on finding agreement where it actually can be found. They retreat behind the fortified walls of our federal bureaucracies, lobbing over project proposals for stakeholders to feud over and watching as the inevitable scrum ensues.

Land managers can and must do a better job of identifying the issues (and there are many, including restoration, grazing, and recreation) where consensus-based collaboration can succeed. They must do a better job of convening and facilitating collaborations, and implementing the creative solutions that emerge from them. Collaborations can help to build a sense of common appreciation for public lands and neutralize the overheated, divisive rhetoric upon which the federal lands takeover movement thrives.

Disappointingly few policies encourage consensus-based collaboration in the public lands realm. The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Act is one policy that does—providing key funding to efforts that demonstrate a broad base of support and a willingness by adversaries to resolve conflicts. The program currently supports nearly 40 forest restoration efforts. Congress should expand this approach, generating solutions where they are needed most and creating an effective antidote to the toxicity of the federal lands takeover campaign.

Finally, we must hold federal land takeover advocates, including public officials, accountable. By caricaturing the federal government and offering remedies cloaked in faux legalese, these leaders foment a misdirected rebellion. At best, this misdirection will increase antipathy towards public lands and their managers. At worst, it will legitimize aggressive and authoritarian attacks on our public lands, like we saw at Malheur.

Federally owned public lands in the United States are a big deal. When managed appropriately, these lands give us the clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, and carbon storage vital to sustaining life across the West. They inspire us, give us solace and a sense of humility. They also force us to come to terms with what it means to be a citizen. Citizens strive—often through vigorous debate—to find a more perfect union of values and priorities. They don't hold our lands hostage at gunpoint, or with threatening rhetoric.

Wendell Berry writes of the challenge of living together in hard country: "It is no paradisal dream. Its hardship is its opportunity". We—federal land managers, elected officials, environmental advocates, and the vast community of public lands users—all have a responsibility to embrace the challenge, the hardship, and the opportunity of public lands citizenship. There is no better place to do so than the Colorado Plateau, and no time to waste.

Ethan Aumack serves as the Grand Canyon Trust's conservation director.

Ethan Aumack

Ethan Aumack, Flagstaff, AZ

"I have spent the best days of my life with my family exploring the vast and incomparably beautiful public lands of the Southwest. My daughter Brynn has already found a joy like no other strapping on a backpack, splashing through desert streams, and wondering at the stars above. Without these lands, our lives would be monochrome. With them, they are Technicolor."

Li Li, Flagstaff, AZ

"I come from a region of China where there are no public lands and no snow. I love the fact that northern Arizona has so much of both! Public lands make America special compared to many other places in the world and we should fight to keep them."

Lindsay Trudeau, Moab, UT

"Public lands allow me to fully immerse myself in wilderness. There is nothing comparable to the excitement, serenity, and beauty of wild places—it is immensely powerful to know that they belong to us all and that we, in turn, belong to them. Let's work to heal the land as it has healed so many of us."

Lindsay Trudeau

I ♥ Public Lands

Li Li

We asked, you answered!

We put out a call for readers to share words and pictures about what public lands mean to them. Here's a sample of what we got back.

Chelan Pauly

Emily Aumann

Chelan Pauly, Wenatchee, WA

"When I go outside, I find solitude, friendship, simplicity, adventure, and meaning in my life. Public lands give everyone an opportunity to find that quality of life."

Emily Aumann, Davis, CA

"Public lands are a place of inspiration and exhaustion, of healing, releasing burdens, and kindling spirits. They are our lifeblood, and, without them, our human race would lose its identity."

Katie Marascio, Tucson, AZ

"Being in these incredible landscapes has given me so much joy. Conserving these spaces and holding them in trust is an immense responsibility we share for future generations of Americans and, really, the whole world."

Katie Marascio

NOTES from the Field

A horse stands at the pasture fence, with crop fields and the White Mesa uranium mill in the background. BLAKE MCCORD

Energy

WHITE MESA MILL LAWSUIT MOVES AHEAD

Back in 2014, we sued the owners of the nation's only operating uranium mill—southeastern Utah's White Mesa Mill—for using a bigger radioactive waste dump than federal law allows, and, for two years running, letting those wastes emit more radon gas than the law permits. We spent last year in the fact-finding trenches, building our case. Now, both sides have made their arguments to the court in writing, teeing the case up for a decision by year's end.

While it's not part of our lawsuit, the mill is being paid to dispose of radioactive wastes from around the country, so long as those wastes are first run through the mill as "alternate feedstock." A new documentary, "Half Life: The Story of America's Last Uranium Mill," explores this dubious practice and potential risks to groundwater should the massive waste ponds leak, a major concern for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe's nearby White Mesa community.

Grand Canyon

ESCALADE ESCALATES, AGAIN

Escalade, the Grand Canyon tram scam, is back. There is, apparently, no statute of limitations on bad ideas. Since 2012, the Trust has been helping the Navajo grassroots Save the Confluence coalition oppose this proposed resort on the Grand Canyon's eastern rim. The resort's gondola would carry up to 10,000 tourists a day from tribal land down into Grand Canyon National Park, to where the Little Colorado and Colorado rivers meet. Profit-promising promoters are pushing to win over 16 Navajo Nation Council delegates, enough to override a certain veto by Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye. Meanwhile, opposition to Escalade continues to mount as people learn the facts about its liabilities and lack of approval by local land-users and Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, and other tribal cultural leaders who consider the confluence to be one of the Grand Canyon's most sacred spaces.

Utah Wildlands

BEARS EARS HOSTS INTERIOR SECRETARY

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and other Obama administration officials visited the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition's summer gathering near the Bears Ears buttes. After enjoying a Hopi meal with tribal leaders, Jewell remarked, "What I have seen on this trip is this incredible treasure trove of cultural resources. It's beyond imagination. I am shocked at the lack of protection." Bureau of Land Management Director Neil Kornze agreed, saying, "We have to up our game here."

The next day, 1,500 people, most in favor of protecting Bears Ears as a national monument, gathered at a public meeting with Jewell and other officials in Bluff, Utah. For three and a half hot hours, the crowd packed into the community center and a large tent outside, while lottery numbers were called. Those lucky enough to have their numbers drawn went to the microphone to take a stand on the proposed monument. "I pray the president has the courage to make this designation," said Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch.

TONY SKRELUNAS

Native America

TRIBES GATHER AROUND DANCE

A hush fell over Arizona State University's 3,000-seat Gammage Auditorium when renowned dancer Rulan Tangen and her troupe took the stage for a performance choreographed in honor of the Colorado Plateau Inter-Tribal Gathering process. "The Gatherings" bring plateau tribes together around shared concerns including protecting water, language, culture, and sacred sites. The troupe had performed the specially choreographed dance at events held in seven tribal communities, culminating in the Gammage show. This final performance, held alongside a spring gathering, helped open a dialogue with southern Arizona's Gila River and Salt River tribes around the preservation of traditional farming and language, and their efforts to protect the Oak Flats area from copper mining.

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell speaks with supporters of the proposed Bears Ears National Monument. TIM PETERSON

Sue Smith happily recording grass and other plant species beneath aspen in the White Mesa Cultural and Conservation Area. ANDREW MOUNT

Utah Forests

BATTLE OF THE GRASSES

Who will win? Native grasses or European pasture grasses in the livestock-free White Mesa Cultural and Conservation Area, which lies within the proposed Bears Ears National Monument? Here you might find needle-and-thread grass bunches or Thurber's fescue, looking like exploding fireworks in three-foot tall bunches. But nearby is a monoculture of Timothy or smooth brome, seeded decades ago by the Forest Service to replace overgrazed native grasses. European grasses survive because they send out trample-proof underground stems called rhizomes, from which new sprouts grow, producing dense stands.

In July 2016, after two years of working hand-in-hand with Trust volunteer botanists, assistants, and interns, researcher Sue Smith finished inventorying native grasses beneath aspen and ponderosa pine in the meadows in the cultural and conservation area. From these data, she'll be able to report the current state of native and exotic grasses, and provide a baseline to track, over the years, who is winning. Kudos to Sue!

Volunteers after a long day of planting ponderosa pine seedlings on the Kaibab Plateau.

Volunteer

CLIMATE DEBATE

On a warm summer evening, a group of 13 volunteers and researchers, young and young-at-heart, but all equally tired, gathered at Mangum Camp in the high country north of the Grand Canyon. They'd just returned from a beautiful day planting ponderosa pine seedlings at lower elevations on the Kaibab Plateau to study how the trees will respond to warmer temperatures brought on by global warming. Chopping vegetables for dinner, the group talked about the realities of climate change here in the Southwest, sparking a heated debate between generations about the future: a lifetime of experience and knowledge versus youthful optimism. As the discussion continued on the porch into the night and laughter echoed through camp, we were reminded that volunteer trips accomplish so much more than the on-the-ground conservation work. They bring generations together to have hard discussions, challenge one another, listen, learn, grow, and find the path forward.

Arizona Forests

FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE

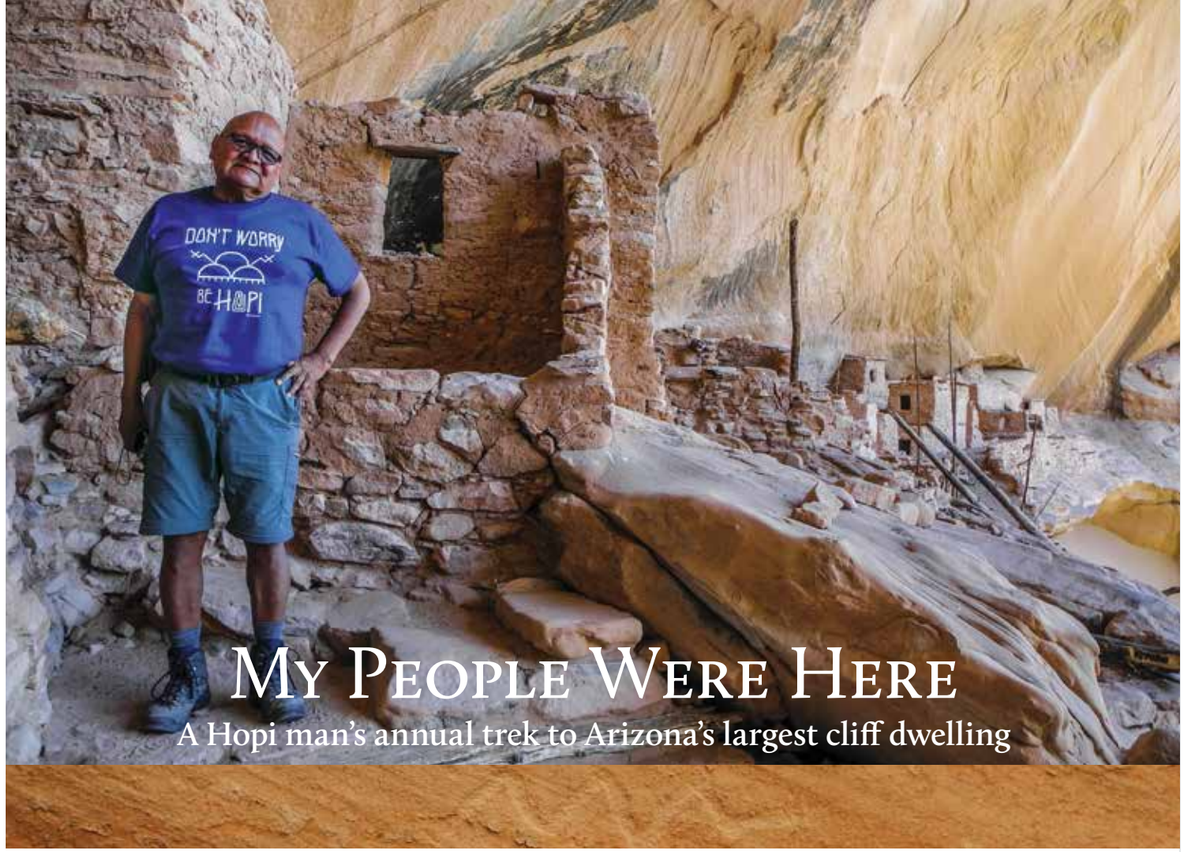
From the conference room to the computer screen to a four-inch-thick environmental impact statement, landscape-scale forest restoration has now finally taken the proverbial leap into the woods. This year you'll see more than 15,000 acres in northern Arizona thinned, and another 50,000 acres burned to protect the forest from damaging conflagrations. In 2017, these numbers may double as the Four Forest Restoration Initiative aims to restore more than two million acres of overgrown forest to a more natural state over the next 20 years, making our forests healthier, safer, and better prepared for the curveballs climate change may throw at them.

TOM BEAN

North Rim Ranches

PARTNERS ACROSS THE FENCE

We do a lot of fieldwork on the North Rim Ranches, from removing cheatgrass to restoring springs, in what is essentially an 830,000-acre outdoor laboratory on the north rim of the Grand Canyon where we study how best to keep desert lands healthy. Since much of this acreage is public land for which we hold a grazing permit, we oversee a conservatively scaled livestock operation. The lifeblood of this operation is managed by our ranching partner, Justun Jones, and his family. We got to see Justun and crew in action when a visit to Kane Ranch coincided with spring branding. With no more than five minutes for each animal, the crew roped, branded, and inoculated the male calves. On the other side of the corral fence, we're working to use the best science to find the best ways to tread lightly on the land.



My People Were Here

A Hopi man's annual trek to Arizona's largest cliff dwelling

TOP: Merv Yoyetewa puts himself in his ancestors' shoes as he makes his annual trek to Kawestima.
ABOVE: This snake petroglyph, etched into the alcove wall at Kawestima, is Merv's clan symbol. PHOTOS BY ELLEN HEYN

Most people fly past the turnoff to Navajo National Monument at 70 mph heading to or from Monument Valley. But Merv Yoyetewa, a Hopi tribal councilman from Mishongnovi, Arizona, makes the turn once or twice a year to visit the cliff dwelling where his ancestors once lived. For Merv, the 16-mile roundtrip hike to Kawestima (more commonly known by its Navajo name, Keet Seel) is a pilgrimage that grounds him in place and time. Here, we find out from Merv why his annual trip is good for the soul.

When was your first visit to Kawestima, and how many times have you been back since?

I'd heard about the 1906 split at Oraibi, where the village divided into progressives and traditionalists who had different ideas on modern cultural influences. They had a shoving match; the traditional people lost and had to leave the village. They were planning to return to Kawestima, where our ancestors once lived, but made it as far as what today is called Hotevilla.

By talking to some older folks I found out that Kawestima was located in Navajo National Monument. I did the research, got the necessary permit, and hiked into Kawestima for the first time in 2008. I think I've been there a total of nine times now.

What was your first impression of Kawestima?

When I first saw the alcove, which stands 70 feet above the ground, I was floored. It was amazing to see this place and think about how much work was put into establishing this village. The first thing I thought of was the hardship these people went through to build this place where they lived for a very short period of time, only about 50 to 60 years. It was pretty emotional for me.

What's your favorite memory from your visits to Kawestima?

When you visit the place, you take the tour, go back to your campsite, relax, and absorb all of the activities that happened there. You look at what the people who lived there had to do compared to our daily gripes. Compared to what they experienced, our life is easy!

What keeps you coming back year after year?

I think the eight-mile hike in deters people. They say, "I'm not hiking eight miles in, 16 miles roundtrip!" But it's what keeps you healthy. Hopis believe that you should remain active, and going out to these places is a way of staying strong, healthy, and young at heart.

To me, it rejuvenates my connection to the place because my ancestors lived there. Not only did Hopi people live in the area, but my clan—the snake clan—lived at Kawestima as indicated by the petroglyph that's on the wall.

How do you trace your ancestry to Kawestima?

During one of my visits, the ranger kept saying, "they lived here, they built this, they, they, they." So I asked the ranger, who is "they"? And he replied, "the Puebloans." So I asked, "Why don't you say that?" People need to know the facts. And the facts are that the Puebloan people lived there. And the Puebloan people are Hopi.

According to members of my family, my clan did not live here in the early days. We migrated from down south in Peru and established residency in the area commonly known as Navajo Mountain. You see a lot of my clanship symbols around Navajo Mountain, Inscription House, and Kawestima. From there, they continued migrating south and then eventually came back toward the Hopi mesas.

Across the Southwest, where else have you seen your clan markings?

I've seen them down along the Sedona area, Camp Verde. And I've heard they're as far south as Springerville, Arizona. I've also seen them at Mesa Verde.

What do the pictographs and petroglyphs at Kawestima mean to you?

My people were here, my ancestors were here, my clan was here. It's a reminder to not take things for granted. This is how they lived. We can hopefully appreciate how much hardship every clan faced. It's a reminder that we were there, and we still exist today.

Interview by Ellen Heyn

Want to retrace Merv's steps? Find more pictures and hike information at grandcanyontrust.org/kawestima

KAWESTIMA BY THE NUMBERS:

154 rooms—includes living spaces, granaries, storage rooms, and kivas
70-foot ladder—required climb to reach the alcove
1250–1300 A.D.—period of occupation
16 lbs—amount of water you need to carry for the two-day hike

Designation: 1909 by President Taft
Size: 160 square miles (composed of three non-contiguous park units)
Cost: Entrance, camping, tours, and hiking permits are free
Season: Keet Seel (Kawestima) and Betatakin are open Memorial Day to Labor Day. Inscription House is permanently closed to visitors.

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We have enjoyed every hiking trail we've been on in the Grand Canyon. The challenging "primitive trails" have been the most memorable.

WHY WE GIVE:
The Trust offers one-stop advocacy for all that is important about the Colorado Plateau, its human legacy, its unique natural landscape, and its fragile and threatened ecological future. Giving to the Trust is a way to pay forward our own commitment to the continuation of this great work.

GETTING OUT ON THE LAND:
We have gained so much from our Trust trips with other donors as well as our roll-up-the-sleeves work with other volunteers. The chance to experience the Bears Ears region last year was special, and to see the working North Rim Ranches helped us appreciate the idea of greater plateau protection even more.

Thank you, David and Joy!