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HIRING REFORM is needed at Grand Canyon National Park

Affiliated Tribes of the Grand Canyon:

Havasupai Tribe

Hopi Tribe

Hualapai Tribe

Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians

Las Vegas Band of Paiute Indians

Moapa Band of Paiute Indians

Navajo Nation

Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah

Pueblo of Zuni

San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe

Yavapai-Apache Nation

Grand Canyon National Park encompasses the traditional lands of at least 11 tribes that have stewarded the canyon since time immemorial and have traditional connections and local expertise.

Yet Native representation at Grand Canyon National Park is low. Hiring reform via permanent legislation is needed to increase Indigenous representation across all levels of park management.

6%

of employees at Grand Canyon National Park are Native.¹

27%

of residents in Coconino County, Arizona are Native.²

What does Native hiring currently look like at Grand Canyon National Park?

In 2021, Grand Canyon National Park received the authority to directly hire employees from six of the 11 affiliated tribes based on their proximity to the park.

Shortcomings of the existing hiring authority:

- It excludes five of the 11 associated tribes.
- It applies only to lower-paying jobs.
- It precludes the option to receive park housing.

What would hiring reform legislation do?

Federal legislation would give Grand Canyon National Park the authority to:

- **Hire** tribal members from all 11 associated tribes into any position based on their local and traditional expertise and historical connections to the Grand Canyon.
- **Create** opportunities for upward career mobility.
- **Increase** representation of Native Americans across all levels, including leadership positions.
- **Enhance** the visitor experience by helping to better integrate Native culture and history into the park.

Case Study: A similar hiring authority for local tribal members was enacted in the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and is an effective tool for increasing Native hiring in federal land management.

Traditional Connections to the Grand Canyon

This map displays ancestral areas associated with certain tribes, as reflected by past archaeological and ethno-historic research. Where possible, these areas have been created based upon tribal knowledge and resources, but are provisional and have the inherent limitation of imposing lines on a fluid and evolving reality.



*Present-day Southern Paiute bands include: Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Kaibab Paiute, and San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe

Map by Stephanie Smith, Grand Canyon Trust

Hiring reform at Grand Canyon National Park is a justice issue

Native peoples were forced off their ancestral lands to make way for Grand Canyon National Park and excluded from park management for more than 100 years.

Hiring reform is a necessary and crucial step in centering Indigenous culture, history, and perspectives at the park, while exposing millions of annual visitors to historic and modern-day connections of the park's original stewards.

The Bottom Line

Grand Canyon National Park needs legislation to expand employment opportunities for Native peoples of the Grand Canyon.

Piloting hiring reform at Grand Canyon National Park can serve as a model across the National Park Service and other federal agencies.

2.5%

of the National Park Service workforce is made up of Native Americans and Alaska Natives.³

Hiring reform is urgent. The nation is reflecting on past harms to communities of color and is attempting to correct historical and systemic racism through policy changes.

¹ LaPre, A.J. Manager of Employee and Organizational Development, Grand Canyon National Park. Personal interview. 6 March 2024.

² United States Census Bureau. "QuickFacts: Coconino County, Arizona." *United States Census Bureau Quick Facts*, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/coconinocountyarizona>. 2021. Accessed 14 March 2023.

³ National Park Service. "By the Numbers." <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/by-the-numbers.htm>. *National Park Service Workforce Demographic Data*. 2020. Accessed 27 March. 2023