

Building a more inclusive and equitable economy FOR THE GRAND CANYON REGION



EMERGENCE

◀◀◀ 2022 ▶▶▶

GRAND CANYON INTERTRIBAL
ECONOMIC SUMMIT

Grand Canyon National Park is an economic powerhouse in northern Arizona. But very few of the park's tourism dollars reach the 11 associated tribes of the Grand Canyon.

In 2018, the Intertribal Centennial Conversations Group, a grassroots advisory body that works to place Native voices at the forefront of education, stewardship, and economic opportunities in Grand Canyon National Park, posed a question:

How can the region's tribal communities establish direct, reciprocal partnerships with Grand Canyon National Park?

To answer that question, 75 Native entrepreneurs, artists, community leaders, governmental support staff, and National Park Service employees gathered on the south rim of Grand Canyon National Park in August 2022 for the first-of-its-kind Emergence Intertribal Economic Summit.

The four-day mix of panels, field tours, and discussions laid the foundation for a more equitable economy that centers, advances, and respects Native cultural values.

Take a look at the conversations blossoming out of the inaugural Emergence Intertribal Economic Summit.

4.5
million visitors at Grand
Canyon National Park

2021
statistics

9,390
jobs supported by
Grand Canyon tourism

\$945
million funneled into
gateway economies



JAMIE ARVISO

What is our share of that as tribes? And how can we help ensure that some of that money is spread around so we all rise up together?

—Charles “Chuck” Sams III,
Director of the National Park Service

Expanding cultural demonstration and vending in the park



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Desert View, the gateway from Grand Canyon National Park to neighboring tribal lands, is transforming into an intertribal cultural heritage site, with an emphasis on first-voice cultural interpretation. **How can its cultural demonstration and vending programs be replicated and adapted elsewhere in the park?**

EMERGENCE ATTENDEES SAY

Expand representation beyond arts, crafts, and dance

Give full multi-dimensional view of Native people

Include Indigenous food and drink

Build indoor and outdoor shaded vending spaces throughout the park

Feature art installations that share stories and histories

Kelli Jones, a Diné park ranger at Grand Canyon National Park, worked at Desert View earlier in her career.



JAMIE ARVISO

We don't talk about cultural appropriation and how that whole tower was built from cultural appropriation.



Architect Mary Colter designed the Desert View Watchtower in 1932 to resemble Ancestral Puebloan buildings. AMANDA PODMORE



JAMIE ARVISO

Carlos Deal, of AlterNativEats, catered all the meals at Emergence. He served modern Native American cuisine featuring cultural staples like blue-corn mush, piñon nuts, tamales, and watermelon.

Creating space for Native foods in Grand Canyon National Park would create opportunities for Deal and other Native chefs to share tastes of their cultures with millions of park visitors.

Increasing concessionaire support for arts and crafts

For Native artists, companies like Xanterra and Delaware North are middlemen that sell their crafts to park goers in Grand Canyon National Park gift shops.

How can these companies, called concessionaires, create more equitable relationships with Native artisans and authentically share stories of their products?



EMERGENCE ATTENDEES SAY

Increase transparency around price points and product sourcing

Provide a centralized location for artists to meet buyers

Educate concessionaires about cultural appropriateness

Include Native artists in concessionaire decisions



For so long, we've just been able to sit along the side of the road and sell our wares. But being able to connect with people coming into the park would open up a lot of opportunities for tribes.

—Mae Franklin, Diné



JAMIE ARVISO



The designs in our jewelry, like our different styles of dancing, all have different meanings. I want to pass down the cultural teachings I've been taught when I have kids of my own. That's how we can keep our culture and traditions alive.

—Colton McClellan, Diné

Repurposing historic buildings in Grand Canyon National Park



K. THOMAS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

An old power plant that generated electricity for the south rim of Grand Canyon National Park sits empty, awaiting its next chapter of development. **How might the power house complex be repurposed to increase Indigenous representation within the park?**

\$20
million
estimated cost
for renovation

The park service is looking into funding for the renovations with the possibility of tribal buy-in.

Built in 1926, the power house is a national historical landmark. Preserving historical elements of the building may draw tourists and lead to creative use of the space.

EMERGENCE ATTENDEES SAY

Native education center/tribal visitor center

Retail space: food, art, clothing, textiles, cultural demonstrations

Evening programming

Housing for artists and vendors

Hub for Native businesses and tours

Supporting gateway communities

Having been pushed off ancestral lands to make way for Grand Canyon National Park, affiliated tribes are now neighbors to the park. But nearly all the tourism dollars flow to off-reservation border towns like Flagstaff, Tusayan, and Page.



I think it becomes a game changer when we ask for what we want, and most importantly, what we need. Because we've always given over to somebody else's power. And that's never worked toward giving equal partnership to tribes and tribal business owners.

—Monica Nuvamsa, Hopi

How do Native gateway communities tap into the economic benefit of Grand Canyon National Park and build equitable relationships over the next 100 years?



EMERGENCE ATTENDEES SAY

Develop tourism infrastructure

Increase Native-owned and operated businesses and tourist attractions

Increase educational opportunities and programs within the park

Develop cooperative community objectives



The idea of being given an opportunity to have selling spaces is music to our ears. We don't want to be pushed to the back. We want to be pushed to the front. My vision is to have retail stores, where our people can set up and rotate out on a consistent basis, and to include our elders and our youth.

—Dorothy Denetosie Gishie, Diné

Building a regional economic alliance



Emergence 2022 was the first step down a long road toward building a more sustainable, equitable, and inclusive Grand Canyon economy. **How can Grand Canyon tribes keep the economic conversations sparked at Emergence going?**

A regional economic alliance of Native community leaders, nonprofits, local governments, park service employees, and others could help turn ideas into action.



GOALS FOR A REGIONAL ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

Help Native economies thrive

Provide education for entrepreneurs

Share correct histories of Native peoples with Grand Canyon visitors

Build equitable economies that care for communities and align with cultural values

Engage Native youth and create opportunities to become the next generation of park leaders



I believe economic stability is having all the tribes included. Not just in the conversation, but with the building of venues or vendor spaces. We need to include all the tribes that call Grand Canyon home so we can collectively move forward.

—Richard Graymountain Jr., San Juan Southern Paiute

"Physical" Changes

- Eliminate Glen Canyon Dam
- Build in ways that benefit GW communities
- Educate young people
- Help young people care about their cultural identity
- Navajo creates limits / ban on outside developers
- Let communities decide what they want
- Renewable energy transportation
- Youth presence at NPS

- Arts & craft vendors
@ Powerhouse Complex

- Native foods

- Souvenirs, tours, gifts

- Location for demonstrations

- Vending @ Desert View

- Tours of Native land by

- Family & youth activities

- Other rec opp's

What do the next 100 years GCNP & Regional Gateway Co

- Bigger Zuni presence - "Zuni Village"

- Zuni food, cooking, ovens, arts, museum, stories
All tribes

- Zuni on Buffalo ²⁶

- NPS employees who like the comm they rep.

- Less push back on how things used to be
= Educated NStvs, NStvs in rec
Native people = School bus w/ children

- Natural setting reminds the same

- Interpretation by many different

- Audio tours

- Adaptable

③ How do we support Community Led
to tourism

work w/us

support Tribal communities
- infrastruct

② What
refer
\$ Eq

- IDolize
↳ our
build

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