



*“We share Desert View as a symbol to bond the peoples of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The Watchtower serves as a connection to embrace the heartbeats of our peoples and visitors far and wide with the heartbeat of the canyon...We are still here.” - Inter-tribal Working Group Vision for Desert View*



Map of Grand Canyon’s traditionally associated tribes, with Desert View. Purple line indicates boundary of Grand Canyon National Park.

## We Need Your Input!

The National Park Service (NPS) is requesting your review of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for proposed actions at Desert View within Grand Canyon National Park. Your participation is vital to our planning process. There are many ways to be involved, including attending one of the Public Review Meetings and submitting comments on the EA (see “How to Comment” on page 2).

## Desert View

Located at the southeast boundary of Grand Canyon National Park, Desert View functions as the east entrance to the park and provides many visitors with their first introduction and orientation to some of the park’s most significant resources - including the Desert View Watchtower (a National Historic Landmark) and its surrounding historic district as well as spectacular views of the Painted Desert and the Little Colorado River gorge. The area also serves as the first stop for information, restrooms, water, food, souvenirs, and gasoline to visitors entering the park from the east along Arizona Route 64 and provides convenient access to some of the neighboring tribal lands.

In 2015, the NPS assumed management of the Desert View Watchtower and began a comprehensive historic preservation project for this National Historic Landmark. The Watchtower was designed by Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, and her well-documented intent was to communicate the ancient architecture and cultures of Native people of the southwest to visitors to the South Rim. Today, the Desert View Watchtower continues its role in conveying to visitors the long history and diverse cultures of Grand Canyon National Park. As the anchor for the Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage site, it also represents an important and continuing cultural partnership for the NPS.

## Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of this project is to increase opportunities for authentic first-voice tribal interpretation, improve visitor orientation, and enhance the overall visitor experience by transforming Desert View from a scenic overlook and visitor services area into an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site.

Specifically, action is needed at this time to: 1) Embrace a unique opportunity to partner with associated tribes; 2) Address visitor orientation issues at Desert View related to only-partial implementation of a 2002 plan for the site; and 3) Proactively respond to increasing visitation and subsequent resource impacts at the site. This proposed action also provides the NPS with the opportunity to implement the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act whose purpose is “to enhance and integrate Native American tourism, empower Native American communities, increase coordination and collaboration between Federal tourism assets, and expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in the United States” (PL 114-221).

The NPS is partnering with the following entities to transform Desert View into an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site: representatives from the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Havasupai, Hopi, Hualapai, Navajo, Zuni, and Yavapai-Apache tribes; the Grand Canyon Association (or Grand Canyon Conservancy as of November 1, 2018); the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA); the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and park concessionaires.

## Public Review Meetings

**FLAGSTAFF**  
November 7, 2018  
6:00-8:00pm (MST)  
DoubleTree  
1175 W Route 66  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

**SOUTH RIM**  
November 8, 2018  
4:00-6:00pm (MST)  
Shrine of the Ages  
20 South Entrance Road  
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023

**WEBINAR**  
November 8, 2018  
12:30-1:30pm (MST)  
(see <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/DesertView/ICHS> for log in instructions)

*Public review meetings will follow an open house format with a presentation and an opportunity to speak with NPS staff before and after the presentation.*



## Next Steps

Following the public review period, the NPS will consider all feedback and make a final decision as to which alternative will be implemented.

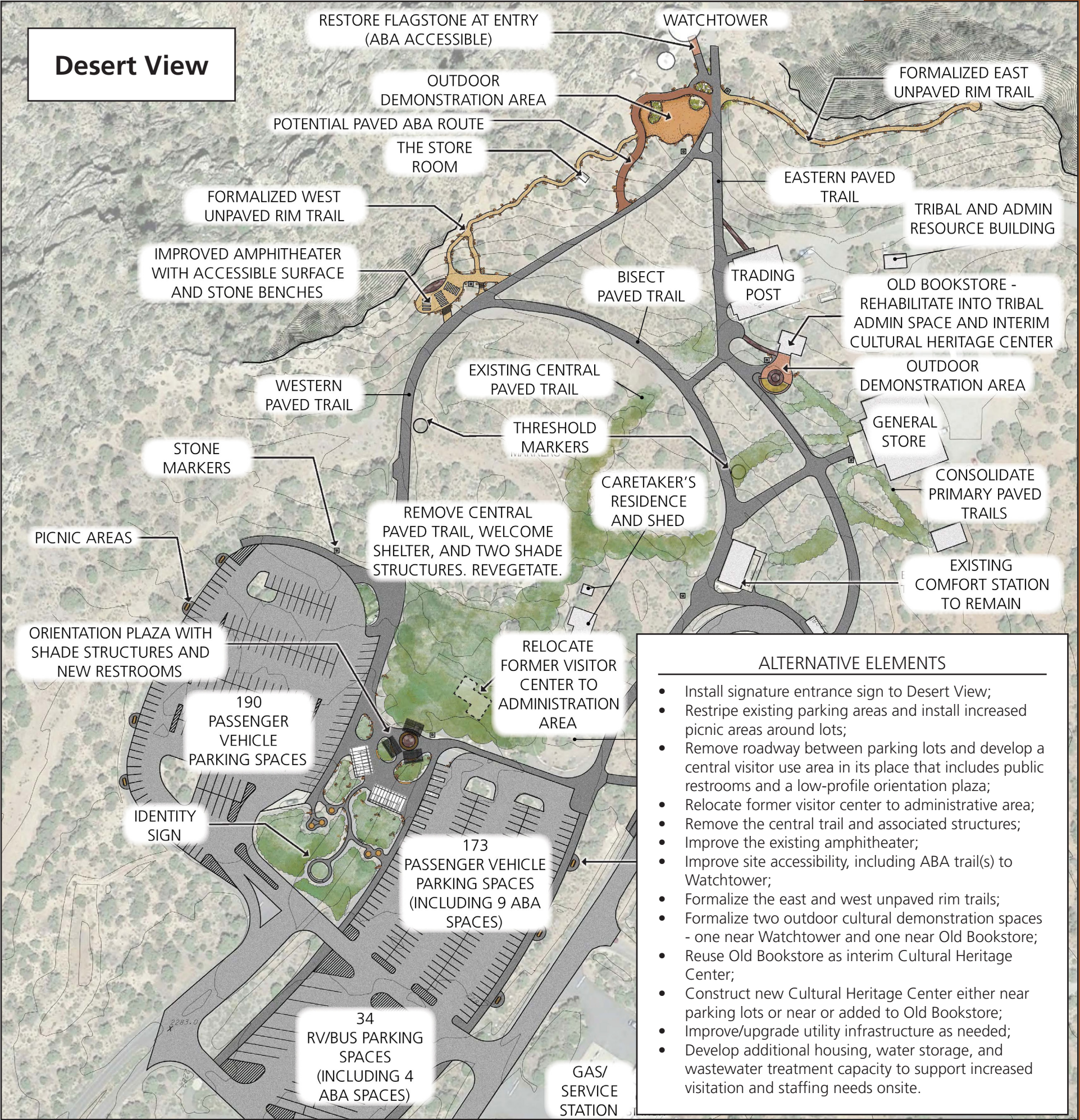
This final decision document will be reviewed by the Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park and, if appropriate, approved by the Regional Director of the NPS Intermountain Region.



# Alternatives Considered

Given the purpose and need outlined in “Purpose and Need for Action” on page 1, the NPS is evaluating two alternatives within an Environmental Assessment: a no action alternative and one action alternative (the proposed action and preferred alternative) that would transform Desert View from a scenic overlook and visitor services area into an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site.

Under the preferred alternative, the NPS would expand opportunities for cultural and educational programs and demonstrations, special events and exhibits, and personal interactions with tribal representatives and artisans. In support of these programs, the NPS would modify some existing infrastructure onsite and complete some new construction within the existing developed footprint at Desert View, including the actions outlined in the map below.



## Potential Impacts

In order to inform the decision-making process, the NPS considered and evaluated impacts to cultural resources (specifically the Desert View Watchtower National Landmark, the Desert View Watchtower National Historic District, and other cultural resources), and visitor experience (specifically interpretation and education opportunities). See Chapter 3 of the EA for more information about these resources and associated impacts.

## How to Comment

Submit comments on the plan via the NPS planning website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/DesertView/CHS>, in person at public review meetings (see schedule on page 1), or write to: Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, Attn: Desert View EA, PO Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023. The preferred method for submitting comments is on the project website, listed above. The public review period extends from October 25 through November 24, 2018.