



Frequently Asked Questions

Desert View Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site Plan/Environmental Assessment

1. Where and what is Desert View?

Located at the southeast edge of Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP), Desert View is a developed area that 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.

2. Why is action needed at Desert View?

Action is needed at this time to a) address visitor orientation issues at Desert View related to only partial implementation of the 2002 plan, b) proactively respond to increasing visitation at the site, and perhaps most importantly, c) embrace a unique opportunity to engage with associated tribes and embrace their interest in partnering with the park to provide first-voice interpretation.

3. What is Grand Canyon National Park proposing to do at Desert View?

In an effort to increase opportunities for first-voice tribal interpretation, improve visitor orientation, and enhance visitor experience, the NPS is proposing to transform Desert View from a traditional scenic overlook and visitor services area into an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site.

The NPS is proposing to expand opportunities for cultural and educational programs and demonstrations, special events and exhibits, and personal interactions with tribal representatives and artisans. In addition to and in support of these programs, the NPS is proposing some modifications to infrastructure onsite and some potential new construction within the existing developed footprint at Desert View, such as:

- Rehabilitate and adaptively reuse historic buildings;
- Remove underutilized shade and other structures;
- Remove the central walkway;
- Restripe existing parking areas;
- Develop a low-profile orientation plaza that provides views of the Watchtower;
- Construct a new restroom facility near visitor parking;
- Convert existing visitor center to a cultural center; demolish visitor center and construct new cultural center; or relocate visitor center and convert to staff housing;
- Expand and/or improve the existing amphitheater;
- Construct or formalize outdoor cultural demonstration spaces;
- Construct a new or incorporate into existing infrastructure a performance area;
- Formalize the east and west rim trails;
- Improve site accessibility, including to the main Watchtower entrance.
- Improve/upgrade utility infrastructure as needed to support facility improvements and increases in visitation.

4. What is an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site?

The Desert View Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site would host programs and facilities that celebrate all of the distinct and diverse cultures of the American Indian tribes that maintain historical, cultural, and spiritual ties to Grand Canyon. Unique to this site, however, is the presence of first-voice interpretation, where NPS staff works to support tribal members who come to Desert View and share their cultural knowledge, heritage and history, and sense of place directly with the visiting public through personal, *first-person*, interactions.

Future programming would expand to support a broader range of the types of cultural demonstrations currently offered, in addition to hosting exhibit space, and providing tourism information that allows interested Grand Canyon visitors to reach neighboring tribal lands.

5. How would the NPS pay for these proposed infrastructure improvements?

GCNP's philanthropic partner, Grand Canyon Association (GCA), has launched the Grand Vision fundraising campaign to help support GCNP through the park's 2019 Centennial. GCA has set a \$4 million fundraising goal through private giving and grants for a Desert View Inter-tribal Heritage Site. Through other NPS funding programs GCNP also has the opportunity to leverage that fundraising effort and apply for special appropriated funding which would partially match the private funds raised, for a total of \$6 million to support this project.

6. How is this plan related to the current Cultural Demonstrator program at Desert View?

GCNP and representatives from the 11 associated tribes began to develop a vision for Desert View in 2015 that would establish inter-tribal programming and a designated place for first-voice cultural interpretation. Based on this vision, GCNP and partnering tribes and associations developed a cultural demonstration program at the Watchtower in 2014 and implemented an Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps internship program in 2015, where tribal youth provide a first-person perspective of their cultures to visitors. Although these programs have been successful beyond expectation, full implementation of this vision requires site modifications to enhance these programs and transform the area into an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site.

7. What tribes are associated with Grand Canyon National Park?

There are 11 traditionally associated tribes:

- Havasupai Tribe of the Havasupai Reservation (Havasupai Tribe)
- Hopi Tribe of Arizona (Hopi Tribe)
- Hualapai Indian Tribe of the Hualapai Indian Reservation (Hualapai Tribe)
- Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians of the Kaibab Indian Reservation (Kaibab Paiute Tribe)
- Las Vegas Tribe of Paiute Indians of the Las Vegas Indian Colony (Las Vegas Paiute Tribe)
- Moapa Band of Paiute Indians of the Moapa River Indian Reservation (Moapa Paiute Tribe)
- Navajo Nation
- Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah—includes Cedar Band of Paiutes, Kanosh Band of Paiutes, Koosharem Band of Paiutes, Indian Peaks Band of Paiutes, and Shivwits Band of Paiutes (Paiute Indian Tribe)
- San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe of Arizona (San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe)
- Yavapai-Apache Nation of the Camp Verde Indian Reservation (Yavapai-Apache Nation)
- Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Reservation (Zuni Tribe)

8. What relationship does the NPS have with associated tribes?

In accordance with the Presidential Memorandum of April 29, 1994, and Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments), the Service will maintain a government-to-government relationship with federally recognized tribal governments. This means that GCNP officials will work directly with appropriate tribal government officials whenever plans or activities may directly or indirectly affect tribal interests, practices, and/or traditional use areas such as sacred sites.

In 2013, after decades of successful partnerships and trust-building through government-to-government consultation, the Tribal Program at GCNP began taking steps to establish an Inter-tribal Advisory Council

(ItAC). The ItAC serves as an informal working group consisting of park staff, partners, and representatives from GCNP's eleven traditionally associated tribes. The purpose of the ItAC is to provide a venue where NPS staff work collaboratively with tribal representatives, *supplementing the formal Government to Government consultation format*, to create and sustain programs that celebrate the diversity of the region while mutually benefitting the park's visitors and the associated tribes.

9. What is an environmental assessment?

The NPS is preparing an environmental assessment (EA), in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, to develop and evaluate alternatives the purpose and need for action at Desert View (see responses to answers #2 and #3 above). An EA guides decision makers as they seek to create policy or take action that balances human need with environmental stewardship.

10. What is "scoping" and why is it important?

Scoping allows the general public, interested groups, and agencies opportunity to participate early in development of the range of issues and alternatives to be considered. Scoping also allows a chance to identify topics and concerns that should be addressed in the EA. Finally, scoping helps bring forward new information useful in preparing the EA of which the NPS may not be aware.

11. How and when can the public comment on the plan?

The public comment period will begin February 5, 2018, and remain open for 30 days. Comments may be submitted by mail, online, or in person at a scheduled public meeting. The preferred method for submitting comments is through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) database at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/DesertViewICHS>. Click on "Documents Open for Review" on the left panel of the webpage.

Mail-in comments can be sent to: Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, Attn: Desert View EA, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

Comments may also be submitted at public meetings scheduled in February 2018. Meetings will take place at Grand Canyon's South Rim, in Flagstaff, AZ, and via a webinar. Meeting dates and locations are posted at the website <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/DesertViewICHS> under "Meeting Notices" on the left panel of the webpage.

12. How will my comments affect the Plan / EA?

Comments that provide insights about the project purpose and the park's current proposal are particularly helpful, and new ideas and proposals are welcome. Following the public comment period, the NPS will analyze and consider all feedback and begin preparation of the EA.

The NPS will not select an alternative for implementation until after the analysis of the alternatives and their potential impacts has been completed within the EA. There will be a second opportunity for public comment on the EA in fall/winter 2018, with the intent to arrive at a final decision by early 2019.