

Understand the » Grand Canyon

GRAND CANYON TODAY..... 178

While noise pollution and vehicle traffic are being tackled, the park is now also facing modern mining concerns; meanwhile, the Skywalk rocks on.

HISTORY 181

The canyon has been occupied and abandoned by ancient Pueblos, explored and exploited by prospectors and pioneers, and preserved as a national treasure by presidents.

GRAND GEOLOGY 193

Rocks 101: What you're looking at, and how it came to be.

WILDLIFE OF THE GRAND CANYON 199

The Grand Canyon comprises five different life zones, in which myriad flora and fauna thrive.

CANYON CONSERVATION 209

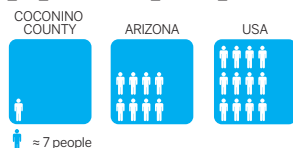
Environmental and conservation issues central to the canyon's contemporary life.

NATIVE AMERICANS OF THE GRAND CANYON 211

Explore the culture of modern-day tribes residing in and around the canyon.



population per sq mile



Grand Canyon Today

Vital Stats

- » One mile deep
- » 18 miles across at its widest
- » 277 river miles long
- » Located in: Coconino County, Arizona

In an era of staycations, Grand Canyon National Park continues to be one of the country's most popular national parks for both Americans and foreign visitors.

A Greener Way

No one comes to Grand Canyon National Park for traffic jams and chaotic atmosphere, so what a blessing the Greenway Plan is. The National Park Service (NPS), working in partnership with the National Parks Foundation, Grand Canyon Association and the US Forest Service, has been developing what will eventually be 73 miles of dirt and paved bicycle and pedestrian paths on both rims. Four of the five planned phases of the Greenway Plan have already been implemented, resulting in pedestrian-only and multi-use paths connecting Hermits Rest to the South Kaibab trailhead on the South Rim. On the North Rim, a paved path now connects Bright Angel Point to the North Kaibab Trailhead. *The Guide* map will show the complete sections of the paved Greenway Trail. Plans are also in the works for a path connecting Grand Canyon Village with the town of Tusayan, outside the South Rim Entrance, but for now the park offers a free park-and-ride shuttle service from 8am to 9:30pm, May to September.

Complementing these vehicle-free paths is the convenient shuttle system on the South Rim. Hop on and off and let these natural gas-powered shuttles get you from Hermits Rest in the west to the South Kaibab Trailhead in the east. Or take a spin on a rental bicycle from Bright Angel Bicycle Rentals on the South Rim, and pedal the park in the open air.

Top Books

» **Hiking Grand Canyon National Park** (Ben Adkison; Falcon, 2011) Indispensable hiking guide to the canyon, with detailed descriptions, hypsometric maps and tips for hiking in this unique environment.

» **Over the Edge: Death in the Grand Canyon** (Michael P Ghiglieri & Thomas M Myers; Puma Press, 2001) Morbidly fascinating and informative, if slightly repetitive, survey of death in the canyon.

» **Beyond the Hundredth Meridian: John Wesley Powell and the Second Opening of the West** (Wallace Stegner; Penguin, 1992) An illuminating look at John Wesley Powell and US water policy, by a literary icon of the American West.