

allow viewing during inclement weather. Plans were made that same year to replace the aging building with a contact station at the same or another location but were set aside a few years later with construction of the park's first visitor center.⁷⁵

Visitors had reason to be upset with village congestion, inadequate parking and overnight accommodations, long lines to obtain meals, and crowded interpretive facilities, but they could not complain about things to do or about prices, which remained tightly controlled despite postwar inflation.⁷⁶ In 1946 one could still enter the park for a dollar and stay forever at a free campsite. This offer proved so attractive that returning veterans, their families, and others stayed at the park's campgrounds while searching for regional housing, in short supply following the war. As for concession facilities, a single room without bath in the El Tovar cost only \$2.50, a one-room furnished cabin without bath in the Motor Lodge only \$2.25. Rooms at the El Tovar and Bright Angel Lodge (single room without bath, \$2.00) could be had on the European or American Plan, while the cost of meals at the El Tovar remained in line with the pre-park era: a dollar for breakfast and lunch and \$1.50 for a full dinner. Cheaper meals were offered at the Motor Lodge cafeteria and Bright Angel coffee shop. The Fred Harvey Company still offered auto, bus, horse, and mule trips into the canyon, along rim paths, and atop East and West Rim Drives at bargain prices: \$7.00 for an all-day Hermits Rest to Desert View ride with refreshments, \$6.00 for a full-day mule trip to the river with lunch, \$6.00 for a room and three meals at Phantom Ranch, and \$18.00 for an overnight Phantom Ranch trip that included room and meals.⁷⁷

By 1955 prices had increased but remained well below inflation. One could enter the park for a dollar and remain fifteen days or pay two dollars for an indefinite stay, enjoying a campsite and all NPS interpretive services and facilities at no additional charge.⁷⁸ The cheapest rooms at the El Tovar cost only \$3.50. Bright Angel and Motor Lodge cabins had undergone substantive upgrades—including hot



Figure 34. Interior of the Naturalist's Workshop, 1948. Louis Schellbach is shown giving a personalized tour. GRCA 1568; photo by J. M. Eden.

and cold running water, individual baths, and water heaters—but still rented for only \$3.00. Meals at the El Tovar had increased to \$1.50 for breakfast and lunch and \$2.00 for dinner, but cheaper repasts and à la carte service were still available at the coffee shop and cafeteria. The Fred Harvey Company had expanded its tours, and the cost of the all-day Hermits Rest-to-Desert View excursion had increased to only \$8.00 and the one-day mule trip to the river to \$10.00. Two-day trips to Phantom Ranch had become so popular, however, that the price jumped to \$32.75, with reservations required well in advance.⁷⁹ A stop at the El Tovar or Bright Angel Lodge transportation desks would secure multi-day trips to the Hopi villages and Havasu Canyon, Rainbow Bridge, Petrified Forest, the North Rim, and many other regional sites at reasonable cost. Fred Harvey literature still advertised the park as “an all-year-round resort,” and proffered many entertainments free of charge. These included the El Tovar's art studio, Indian dances beside the Hopi House each afternoon, “cowboy musical programs” and dances several nights per week at Bright Angel Lodge, movies twice per week at the community building (open to tourists), and admission to Hermits Rest, Hopi House, Lookout Studio, and the Watchtower. The Fred Harvey Company also offered family rates and winter package tours in an effort to balance the summer boom/winter bust visitation cycle.⁸⁰

PROTECTION ISSUES

While park managers devoted more time and money to protection of employees, visitors, and aesthetic features of developed areas, administrators at the headquarters level continued to play the lead role in looking after the park's integrity, with varying degrees of success. Boundary studies had been completed immediately after the war, but the only adjustment made in ensuing years was the acquisition of 1,120 acres in the vicinity of Hull Tank and Moran Point, known collectively as the "Hull Tank Addition." This transfer from the national forest took place in August 1951 and created a greater buffer between hunters and tourists along East Rim Drive.⁸¹ The General Land Office through the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s methodically exchanged parcels of the public domain for tens of thousands of state-owned inholdings. By 1942 the last of these had been acquired, bringing total federal holdings to 645,120 acres. The government bought the Buggeln ranch in 1948 and the Rowe Well mining claims in 1956, adding another 200 acres. The land office also exchanged several thousand acres of state lands within Grand Canyon National Monument during the 1930s and 1940s, bringing total federal acreage there to 196,051 by 1949.⁸²

Since the 1930s, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) officials had worked together to keep Grand Canyon's approach roads free of billboards, tawdry enterprises, unnecessary developments of any type, litter, and logging to maintain a natural-looking veneer for tourists nearing the park. In the mid-1930s Superintendent Tillotson had successfully lobbied John Collier of the BIA to keep Navajos from setting up craft and jewelry stands beside the new road from Cameron and persuaded John Verkamp to remove billboards he had erected along the road from Williams. As the Arizona Strip lumber industry began to emerge in 1948, Harold Bryant, aware of forest service plans to harvest trees within the central Kaibab Plateau, requested a 1,200-foot "scenic easement" along the road from Jacob Lake. In the same year Bryant observed that mining claims had been filed at the intersection of U.S. 66 and AZ 64, ostensibly to harvest building stone, which the superintendent did not believe for a minute. When the claimants applied for patent several years later to build a service station and automotive camp, park and forest officials foiled the entrepreneurs' plans. By 1950 park officials had convinced Arizona's senators to introduce bills to protect "scenic values" along canyon approaches, one of which was signed into law in July 1951 protecting the South Approach Road. It is also probable that they offered their support, certainly their gratitude, for the passage of Arizona's anti-littering law in 1953.⁸³

More complicated and tenacious issues concerning the park's integrity made their appearance soon after the war. Foremost were imminent threats to build dams creating reservoirs within western parks and monuments. Entrepreneurs had envisioned smaller dams within Grand Canyon soon after the turn of the century, including somewhat serious intentions to impound the Colorado River at the mouth of Diamond Creek and tributaries at the mouth of Bright Angel Creek, within Tapeats Narrows astride Garden Creek, and among the waterfalls of Havasu Canyon. Greater danger was posed by the Colorado River Compact (signed in 1922), river surveys of the 1910s and 1920s, and the federal government's commitment to build dams to supply water and power to support a new wave of western immigration and extractive industries.⁸⁴ These projects, to be undertaken with the technical expertise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, fostered debate at congressional, presidential, and judiciary levels of government, reducing the National Park Service to one special interest group among many.

Although they lacked legislative authority, NPS administrators since 1919 had successfully fought dozens of efforts to invade the parks with water projects large and small.⁸⁵ In the early 1930s they had not opposed construction of Bridge Canyon Dam because they did not recognize the lower canyon's scenic value and tourism potential and because the dam site had been selected before creation of Grand Canyon National Monument. As more definitive building plans emerged after the war, conservation groups like the Sierra Club were similarly unconcerned for a high power dam at the site, reasoning that it and the resulting reservoir would be unobtrusive in the remote location, flood nothing of great significance, and open that portion of the canyon to recreation.⁸⁶ In 1948, however, the NPS began to speak out against the dam, apparently forgetting earlier administrators' apathy and taking a line more consistent with Stephen Mather's opposition to all such proposals within the parks and monuments. They also condemned what they considered a more serious threat: a proposal to build a dam within Marble Canyon that would divert the Colorado's flow through a fifty-four-mile-long tunnel beneath the Kaibab Plateau to a hydroelectric plant beside Kanab Creek, just above the headwaters of the proposed Bridge Canyon reservoir.⁸⁷

The Kaibab project was eliminated from Colorado River Storage Project considerations by 1949. NPS director Conrad Wirth expressed relief that the river between Marble Canyon and Kanab Creek would not be reduced to the flow of the Little Colorado, but debates over Bridge Canyon Dam persisted.⁸⁸ Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman, although he had approved the construction of



Figure 35. The first (and only) plane to land within the canyon, at Plateau Point, on 8 August 1922. GRC/A 5235; Fred Harvey Company photo.

dams at Dinosaur National Monument in 1950, was successful in his efforts to amend Senate Bill 75 to limit Bridge Canyon Dam to an elevation of 1,877 feet above sea level. This was a compromise position,

since a dam this size would still flood the river through the monument and eighteen miles within the park, but given the political atmosphere and Bureau of Reclamation's power in the mid-1950s, it is unlikely that the NPS or anyone else could have accomplished more.

In any event, the issue faded temporarily when the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs tabled the dam's authorization until California and Arizona resolved their battles over Colorado River allocations. This would not happen until the following decade when the two states worked out agreements that would authorize Arizona's Central Arizona Project, triggering a new round of controversy over dams within Grand Canyon.⁸⁹

A more persistent issue taking shape after the war concerned the presence and role of aircraft within the parks. Stephen Mather first addressed the matter in 1919 when he noted their presence at Yosemite and Grand Canyon and began to receive proposals for scenic flight tours at Yellowstone and Glacier.⁹⁰ Mather understood that aviation would play some role within the parks, perhaps encouraging an airway above his cherished park-to-park highway or scenic flights above some units, and almost certainly approving of flights for administrative and fire-sup-

pression purposes. His principal concerns were for passenger safety, given aircraft's experimental nature, and for allowing "greater accessibility to the park regions in this manner." Uncertainty persisted, but by the early 1930s Horace Albright had begun to set policy whereby air service would be considered on a park-by-park basis but, in nearly all cases, would not originate nor terminate within park boundaries.⁹¹

This limited policy continued through the war years, but with renewed attention and technology advanced by World War II, administrators knew that the

entire issue of aircraft and the national parks would have to be addressed. In 1944 the NPS clarified its policy that landing fields and associated buildings, like rail and bus terminals, would be located outside park boundaries, as would experiments with "air-transport, helicopter, or private plane." This decision was based on beliefs that landings and take-offs were the most dangerous moments of air travel, that facilities within parks were unnecessary intrusions since they could easily be built on adjacent lands, and that noise at take-off would disrupt the "serenity and peace" sought by visitors and might also bother wildlife. Administrators held fast to their ban on inner-park airports despite protests from aviators and their growing industry, but assisted the Civil Aeronautics Administration and inter-departmental committees to build adjacent airports to serve park visitors. At the same time, they tried unsuccessfully to implement regulations that would set overflight ceilings and otherwise control operations surrounding the parks.⁹²

Aircraft appeared within hours of Grand Canyon becoming a national park when, on the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth of February 1919, Lieut. R.O. Searles, in command of a squadron of DeHaviland 450-horsepower bombers, followed a triangular pattern out of Kingman to make several flights above and below the canyon's rims from Diamond Creek to the Little Colorado River.⁹³ In the same year Stephen Mather wrote that private operators proposed to establish regular service connecting the North and South Rims. He acknowledged the advantages in bypassing the trail corridor and treacherous wagon roads, as well as the fact that the most comprehensive views could be obtained

from the air. Still, he questioned the efficacy of air service, citing the need for aircraft to climb as high as 14,000 feet for safety, and welcomed additional tests. Lieutenant Alexander Pearson flew up from Nogales in June 1921 and, based out of Williams Field, made fourteen flights totaling twenty-two hours above and below the rim. Pearson judged that a rim-to-rim connection was feasible if landing strips were located at least two miles back from the abyss to afford space to gain altitude. In August 1922 R.V. Thomas, with Ellsworth Kolb as cameraman, flew from Williams and made the first landing and takeoff within the canyon at a promontory of the Tonto Platform called "Turtle Head" near Plateau Point. Thomas made a return flight ten days later with a cameraman from the Fox Weekly motion-picture company.⁹⁴

These early trips, without serious mishap, persuaded administrators that planes could be used at Grand Canyon for administrative purposes, but they rejected requests for landing fields within the park and remained uncertain about the future of commercial sightseeing flights. Scenic Airways established such a service in 1927, obtaining a forest service permit to build facilities and a landing strip just north of Red Butte. In 1929 they inaugurated transcanyon flights after clearing a strip on the North Rim at VT Park, just south of the Kaibab Lodge. Because Scenic Airways had safely served 7,200 passengers by that year with dependable tri-motor planes, Superintendent Tillotson agreed to a contract between the airline and Fred Harvey Company whereby business was solicited and flights sold from the El Tovar and Bright Angel Lodge. Scenic Airways ceased operations in 1929, but the following year sold its interests to another reliable operator, Grand Canyon Air Lines, which reinstated regular flights in April 1930 and expanded tours to other regional panoramas. The airline won the support of park administrators, who considered a concession contract the following year and began to send NPS naturalists along on flights in 1932.⁹⁵

If flight operations had remained based at Red Butte and VT Park (about fifteen miles back from each rim) and overflights few, unobtrusive, and without mishap, it is unlikely that aircraft would have become a major issue at Grand Canyon. Nothing remained as it was after the war, however. More tourists with greater wealth flocked to the national park, and entrepreneurs with technological innovations and designs on visitor dollars crept closer to its boundaries. Administrators would not equivocate in their prohibition of landing fields along the rim, but did welcome the appearance of a third airfield at Valle that would be served by national airlines and promised to bring more visitors to the park. At the same time, Superintendent Bryant as early as 1947 considered "air-borne" visitors "one of the most important policy matters" facing the service, akin to the

challenges posed in 1913 when automobiles had first begun to impact the parks.⁹⁶

Bryant's personal concern stemmed from low-flying planes that had begun to buzz the village and mule parties below the rim, but he took even greater exception to the arrival of commercial helicopters—machines that could hover a few feet above ground and land just about anywhere. His genuine distaste arose from the efforts of Edwin J. Montgomery, president of a small company named Arizona Helicopter Service, to base scenic flights within the park in 1949. When Bryant rejected his proposal, Montgomery tried a few political end runs, then arranged to fly out of the Tusayan Auto Court, where he also operated a nightclub and restaurant. His operations lasted only a few months, from June through November 1950, but in that brief span he unnerved park staff and visitors alike by hovering near interpretive programs at Yavapai Observation Station and elsewhere along the rim. He also approached Madelaine Jacobs and managers of the Hearst estate to establish landing facilities at the Orphan Mine beside the rim and on the Hearst Tract along the river. Threats ended only when Montgomery wrecked one of his two helicopters (while airlifting members of the Hudson-Marston river party) in June and the other in November. Grounded and awaiting parts, the superintendent's "air-borne" nemesis gave it up and moved to New Jersey, but the experience caused park administrators to look askance at this recreational activity from that year forward.⁹⁷

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Dams, aircraft, and other complex issues that were begun or aggravated by national wealth, new technology, regional immigration, and greater exploitation of the Southwest would loom large at Grand Canyon in the years ahead, but in the period bracketed by the second world war and financial readjustments administrators clung to the ups and downs of ingrained policy. Their principal goals remained the proliferation and maintenance of administrative and concession facilities for the comfort and edification of visitors, followed by protection of the scenic resource. The war itself mitigated administrative demands, but the tourist onslaught in its aftermath, along with static funding, post-war inflation, personnel ceilings, and reduced work weeks, produced a sense of failure. Systemwide, the National Park Service lost some of its focus as it was called upon to do more for national recreation planning. At the local level, managers faced new challenges like utility operations, safety precautions, vandalism, littering, and escalating complaints from the public they tried to serve. Caught in the maelstrom and, by these years, not inclined to think in terms of limits to visitation, it is small wonder that they longed for more funds and personnel to catch up with tourist demands.

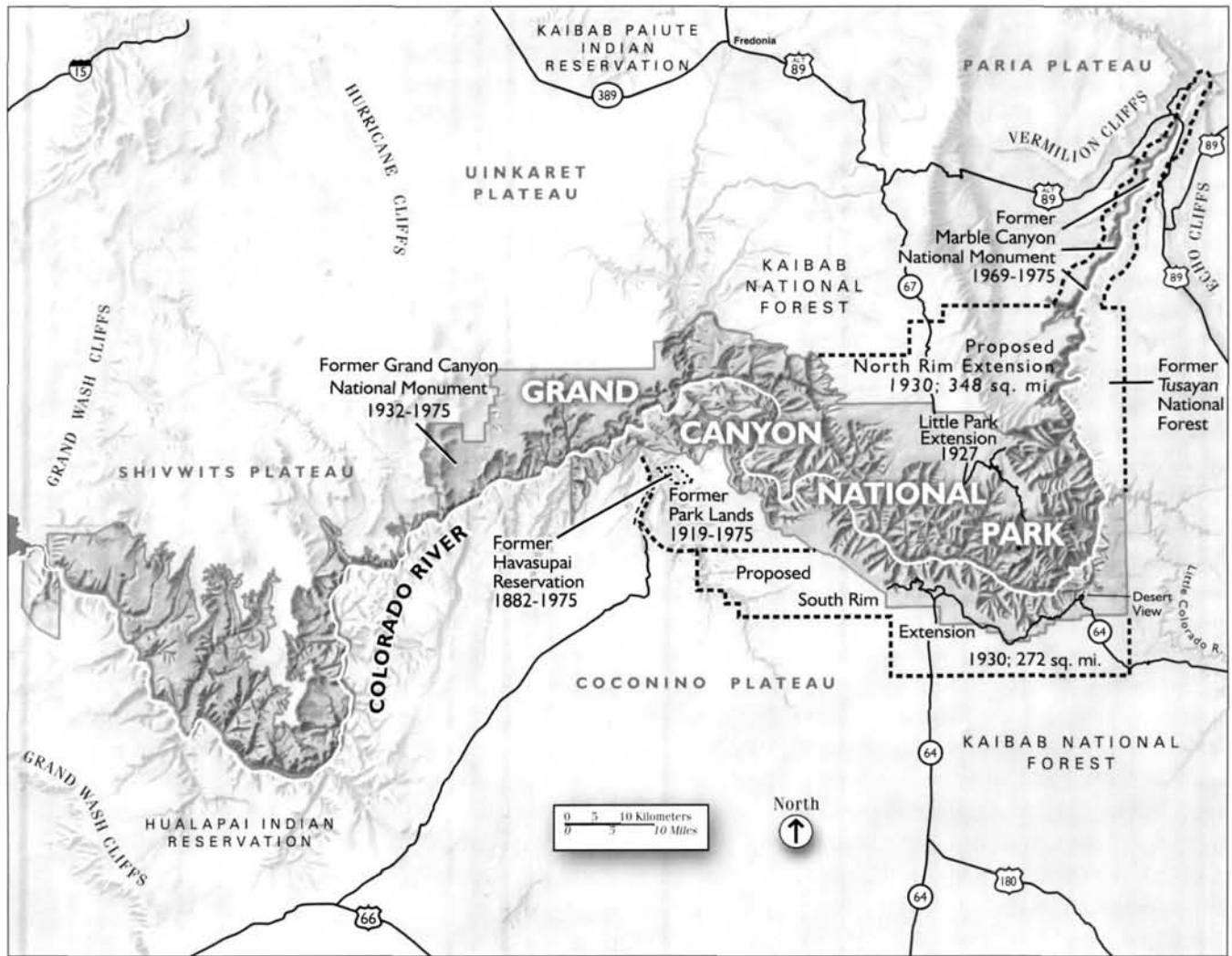


Figure 36. Grand Canyon National Park boundaries reflect more than a century of political struggle among presidents, Congress, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, American Indian tribes, regional economic interests, national environmental groups, and concerned citizens. This map depicts the present park boundary, extending from Lees Ferry to the Grand Wash Cliffs, but superimposes the major boundary shifts and attempted additions over the years. The park lost ground when the 1,279-square-mile monument (see figure 1)

was reduced to a 958-square-mile park in 1919 (compare to figure 21). It also lost lands encompassing Great Thumb Mesa to an expanded Havasupai Reservation in 1975 and failed to secure North and South Rim additions proposed in 1930. The greatest land gains were achieved with the Little Park extension in 1927 and with the 1975 Grand Canyon National Park Enlargement Act, which added Grand Canyon and Marble Canyon National Monuments along with other public lands to form the present park.