FROM THE CEO

“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity.”

John Muir, the great advocate for preserving our country’s wilderness, wrote those words well over a century ago. Before the advent of television. Before the 24-hour news cycle. Before the Internet and social media. I can’t imagine what Muir would say about our world today. But you can bet his remedy to counteract the “nerve-shaking” we experience—probably 100 times worse now than in his day—would be the same. “Get out into nature,” he’d advise.

There is truly nothing that helps us reset like spending time in wild places. Here at Grand Canyon, you have only to set off on one of our many trails to recover the balance we tend to lose as we navigate our modern world. During the time I lived at Grand Canyon, I’d stay on track by hiking the South Kaibab Trail several times a week. Sometimes it was just a morning jaunt down to Cedar Ridge. If I had more time, I’d hike down to Skeleton Point. That feeling of the canyon’s depth and splendor never gets old.

How easy it is to take South Kaibab for granted. And Grandview, Hermit and Grand Canyon’s many other trails. But I urge you not to. Trail restoration remains one of Grand Canyon Association’s highest priorities. With your help, we’re committed to enhancing and preserving these historic trails that John Muir traveled, that I’ve hiked and maybe trails you’ve trekked too. Let’s pass that gift to future canyon explorers.

I’m grateful for all you do to preserve and protect our trails and every aspect of this national treasure. To borrow Edward Abbey’s words: “May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds.”

See You at the Canyon,
History Along the Trail

Protecting Grand Canyon’s Unique Trailside Resources

Beginning with ancient peoples who ventured into the canyon to hunt thousands of years ago, to adventurers and prospectors hoping to make their name or fortune below the rim, trails have enabled the exploration of the Grand Canyon’s huge and often daunting landscape.

Each of the canyon’s trails has a unique and remarkable history, and each passes through millions, sometimes billions, of years of geologic time, countless wildlife habitats, and tens of thousands of years of human history. Inevitably, these paths through time give in to the forces of nature, impacted by flooding, rock slides and erosion. To keep these trails accessible, traversable and ready to inspire the next generation of canyon stewards, Grand Canyon National Park has dedicated, trail-focused personnel with an amazing range of specialties.

“I’ve realized over time that doing my job as an archeologist doesn’t just protect material artifacts and objects, it protects our Native American identity.”

—Jason Nez

Jason Nez has worked seasonally for Grand Canyon National Park as an archeological technician since 2011. “Growing up on the Navajo Reservation, it’s hard not to interact with the past because there is history and prehistory everywhere you look,” he says. “I’ve realized over time that doing my job as an archeologist doesn’t just protect material artifacts and objects, it protects our Native American identity.” Nez continues, “I love to work at Grand Canyon as part of a team that allows me to actively
participate in the preservation and protection of cultural resources.”

This last season, Nez worked closely with a canyon trail crew to help plan upcoming trail work projects around the park. Prior to any trail restoration or repair, the area is assessed to determine potential impacts on the sometimes hidden flora, fauna and artifacts. “Conducting archeological work at the canyon, or anywhere, requires a diverse skill set,” Nez explains. “I often work with the GIS (geographic information system) to create maps and as a tool to locate old sites. I have to be well versed in artifact identifications, everything from projectile points to old cans.” Biologists and other specialists also map the locations of endangered plant and animal species to help determine the best restoration work plan—all this before there is even a single tool used!

The next time you hike into the canyon, take a moment to stop and think of all those who have traveled down the trail before you and know that you are in good company wherever the path may lead.
Bicycles for Tuweep

The scenic but very remote Tuweep area, ancestral home of the Southern Paiute tribe, is located at the west end of Grand Canyon National Park, 3,000 vertical feet above the Colorado River. This location offers a dramatic view into the canyon with a volcanic landscape unique to the park. Because Tuweep is so remote with harsh road conditions, the National Park Service rangers and volunteers patrol on foot and bicycle to ensure the natural and cultural resources in this area are protected. A generous donor contributed $10,000 for equipment to improve the Tuweep volunteer program. With a focus on greatest need, this donation made it possible to purchase new state-of-the-art off-road bicycles, deeply discounted thanks to Charge Bikes. With these new wheels, volunteers and rangers are better able to respond to park visitor needs and protect Tuweep’s unique resources.

The S. L. Gimbel Foundation Takes on Trails

Grand Canyon Association was recently awarded a $100,000 grant from the S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund at The Community Foundation – Inland Southern California to restore and stabilize the historic South Kaibab Trail. The National Park Service will use the funds to employ a specialized Arizona Conservation Corps field crew. This critical work will further ensure the safety of park visitors and personnel who frequent this important trail. We are grateful to the S. L. Gimbel Foundation, along with all of our amazing supporters, for making it possible to keep Grand Canyon GRAND!
“In 2013, a boater on a private river trip sent us a photo of a black-and-white animal with the question ‘What exactly is that?’ It was pretty obvious that it was a hog-nosed skunk,” said National Park Service Wildlife Biologist Brandon Holton. What was remarkable about this particular photograph was that hog-nosed skunks had never been documented in Grand Canyon before.

These skunks are normally found in southeastern Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, so it wasn’t known at the time whether the animal was an outlier, just passing through or if there was a new population of animals making their home in Grand Canyon National Park.

Holton describes the animal for someone who has never seen it as “small to mid-sized, black with a completely white back and tail, with a hairless snout and long claws used for rooting.” Hog-nosed skunks look more like badgers than a typical skunk, which is why they are also known as the badger skunk.

The National Park Service Science and Research Management Team developed a study to determine how many other hog-nosed skunks...
there were in Grand Canyon and where they were located. Funding from Grand Canyon Association donors supported this study, helping to purchase 24 remote-triger cameras and fund the hours needed to review all the images. The cameras captured an enormous number of photos: over 75,000, Holton estimates. “Easily 90 percent of the photos did not display what we were looking for,” he said. But that other 10 percent significantly documented the skunks.

“We found out that hog-nosed skunks are distributed along at least 55 miles of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon—which is a large population for this species,” Holton explained. “I expected a few here and there, but the study also revealed that they live on both sides of the river, which is amazing.” The cameras even documented juveniles, or “kits,” on both sides of the river. What park biologists still don’t know is how hog-nosed skunks ended up on the north side of the canyon, although one theory is that a few enterprising individuals took the chilly plunge and swam across.

What Happens Next?
In order to get a better idea of where these animals came from, biologists want to collect fecal pellets to genotype and compare them to other populations around the region.

Next time you are in Grand Canyon, keep your eyes open and camera at the ready … you may be able to document the next new species to call the canyon home!

The animals of Grand Canyon were also documented thousands of years ago by the canyon’s first human inhabitants. These people painted or pecked animal imagery on canyon walls, some of which is still visible today. We know from our tribal partners that these images represent clans, migrations and possibly religious beliefs.
A Grand(view) Adventure

By Bill and Susan Ahearn

Bill and Susan Ahearn are hiking enthusiasts and GCA supporters who have been traversing Grand Canyon’s trails for over 40 years. Living in Phoenix has given them the opportunity to frequent new trails as well as revisit some old favorites. They have also enjoyed participating in Grand Canyon Association Field Institute courses to learn more about science in Grand Canyon National Park. Recently the Ahearns took a walk down memory lane and hiked the Grandview Trail to Horseshoe Mesa to observe some of the trail work that was completed in 2016.

We took our first hike on the Grandview Trail as a young couple in 1979. We had been down the “freeway” trails to Phantom Ranch, but this was our first backpack on one of the park’s unmaintained trails (as they were called then). It was an adventure as we admired the beauty—and the pitch—of the trail.

The construction of the Grandview Trail is amazing. Pete Berry and others built the 3½-mile trail in 1892 to access their Last Chance mining claim on Horseshoe Mesa. Some stretches have intricate rock work, similar to parts of the upper Hermit Trail. In other places, log cribbing is used to span gaps in the rock walls.

On that first trip, in 1979, erosion and rock falls had impacted parts of the trail, but it was still passable. It was clear, however, that failure of the log cribbing or a major rock fall could seriously impair the safety of the route. Nevertheless, we ventured down Grandview Trail a number of times after that.

We came up the trail in 2016 and, to our surprise, the upper section of the trail looked different: it looked great! A Grand Canyon trail crew had
been at work with some impressive rock and timber work. What was perhaps the worst section of the trail was now safer and more secure. It was a part of the Grandview Trail Restoration project, one of seven sections of the trail that had been rebuilt with the help of funding from the Grand Canyon Association supporters.

This spring we joined several staff members on a hike to examine the finished work. The hike down to Horseshoe Mesa and back is still an adventure—a drop of 2,600 feet in three miles. Regardless, we had to appreciate the work of the crew. Through manual labor and mostly hand tools, they hauled materials from the rim, removed debris from the trail, rearranged boulders, rebuilt the trail tread, diverted erosional water flow and installed new signs ... all this while avoiding damage to rare and sensitive plants. Even with all of these improvements, the trail maintains its wilderness feel.

Grandview Trail has a new lease on life that we couldn’t have imagined in 1979. Occasional maintenance will always be needed on backcountry trails to keep them open and safe, and we personally want these trails kept usable for the enjoyment of all who want to experience them. That’s why we support the Grand Canyon Association’s trails funds ... and encourage you to do the same!
**Attend the Celebration of Art!** Join art lovers at the South Rim in September for the 9th Annual Celebration of Art at Grand Canyon. Save the dates:

- September 9–15: Artists paint *en plein air* at Grand Canyon
- September 15–17: Special weekend events to celebrate participating artists
- September 17, 2017–January 15, 2018: Exhibit and sale continues at Kolb Studio

**Learn more about** Grand Canyon’s cultural history and tribal connections at Tusayan Museum and enjoy the famous Fred Kabotie murals at Desert View Watchtower. You can also visit [www.nps.gov/grca/learn](http://www.nps.gov/grca/learn).

**Share your experience!** Do you have a Grand Canyon story to tell? We would love to hear from you so others can be inspired to preserve and protect this incredible place. Share on Facebook, or email us at [facebook@grandcanyon.org](mailto:facebook@grandcanyon.org).

**Donate today.** There is never a shortage of needs at Grand Canyon National Park, and your contribution will help GCA support the park’s highest priorities. Donate online at [www.grandcanyon.org](http://www.grandcanyon.org) or by phone at (800) 858-2808.
From our inception in 1932, education has been a vital part Grand Canyon Association’s mission. For the past 24 years, the Grand Canyon Association Field Institute (GCAFI) has delivered on this commitment with high-quality educational classes and tours. Our experienced instructors provide “deep-dive” learning opportunities on wide-ranging topics throughout the park.

Though the format varies from rim walks to white-water rafting, the objective remains the same: sharing the rich natural and cultural history of the iconic Grand Canyon and fostering a sense of stewardship in the 3,000-plus participants we host each year.

“‘The guides were awesome—so educational and patient! Encouraging and helpful in every way. Such an amazing first visit to the canyon—life changing to have experienced the Grand Canyon up close and personal . . . Thank you so much!’”

—Amy W.

**UPCOMING CLASSES:**

**Yoga on the Edge**
September 29–October 1; Price: $325
What better place to rejuvenate mind and body than one of Earth’s seven natural wonders? Join Kelley Ingols on the edge of the canyon and find your balance while learning about the world’s grandest chasm.

**Fiber Arts & Wool Workshop**
October 7–8; Price: $245
Respond to the beauty of the landscape through the magic of fiber art under the direction of Kim Buchheit. The intriguing story of Navajo churro sheep and an interpretive South Rim sunrise experience will also be part of the program. All art materials are included.

Visit [www.grandcanyon.org/fieldinstitute](http://www.grandcanyon.org/fieldinstitute) for a complete list of tour and class opportunities.

In addition to our advertised classes, GCAFI offers customized single and multiday programs for families or groups. Contact our team at (866) 471-4435 to explore your options. We hope to see you soon at your Grand Canyon National Park.
Win-Win
Giving Stocks and Bonds to Grand Canyon

Donating appreciated securities, including stocks or bonds, is an easy and tax-effective way for you to make a gift to Grand Canyon Association. You’ll avoid paying capital gains tax on the sale of appreciated stock and receive a charitable income tax deduction—at the same time, you’ll support our mission of inspiring people to protect and enhance Grand Canyon National Park for present and future generations.

Contact Ann Scheflen to give appreciated securities at (928) 863-3876 or ann@grandcanyon.org.

BECOME A GRAND GUARDIAN

Help protect and sustain one of America’s most enduring landscapes with a gift of $1,000 or more and enjoy special benefits that connect you to our natural wonderland. Your gift will make an immediate impact on the park you love by supporting preservation of world-renowned trails and historic buildings, funding groundbreaking scientific studies and helping rangers provide world-class educational programs. Come be part of something Grand!

Please contact Anne Dowling to become a Grand Guardian at (928) 863-3883 or adowling@grandcanyon.org.