



Chapter Seven

Upshots and Prognosis

What human beings feel about Grand Canyon has as much to do with how it has been managed as with the desire to preserve or exploit the scenic landscape for its economic potential. We surmise that American Indian peoples considered it a mysterious place, but it was also home, offering resources for subsistence and trade. The explorer Garcia Lopez de Cárdenas may have sensed the mystery when he visited the South Rim in 1540 but thought of the canyon primarily as a travel obstacle and wasteland, of no use to the Spanish empire and therefore left as a refuge to native inhabitants. Footloose trappers probably shared some of these emotions while extracting a few pelts before moving along to more accessible terrain. Purposeful federal explorers searching for travel routes, resources for eastern markets, and settlement possibilities mostly agreed with Cárdenas's judgement, but they arrived with a national agenda and therefore persevered around the obstacle, their surveys resulting in a wagon road (and later a railroad) linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Early residents and travelers certainly did not have uniform experiences, but each culture's pioneers must have felt a rainbow of emotions invoked by discovery, the adventure of not knowing exactly where one is standing in relation to the known world or what awaits around the next corner. After the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad arrived, real adventure began to give way to the brow-knitting business of incorporating the canyon into the international economy, and experience varied widely between those who came for profit and those who came for their own personal discoveries. Pioneer entrepreneurs looked for both as they built the first roads, trails, camps, and hotels, and while they proved in the long run to be scouts for world capitalism, they thought of themselves as individualists working hard for their own benefit in a spectacular place. They were well aware of their location but experienced some of the original awe and mystery, fear and discovery that others felt because the canyon itself remained remote, unknown, and unvisited. Pioneer anecdotes, letters, and journals reveal these emotions as well as a genuine love for the chasm's splendor, distant views,

untamed river, grand geologic formations, intimate inner-canyon springs, and wildlife.

The first tourist operators relished the canyon even more perhaps, sharing their passion with the relaxed few who came by wagon and stage for their own adventures, stayed for a week or more in spartan accommodations, then wrote soaring prose of episodes we can only imagine a century later. The canyon experience at that time contrasted sharply with everyday lives in turn-of-the-century eastern and midwestern cities, where automobiles and trolleys, electricity and telephones were fast civilizing former frontiers. Visitors to the canyon wore stuffy suits and exquisite dresses but stayed in tents and cabins, enjoyed the outrageous stories of Bill Bass and John Hance, read poetry alone beside uncluttered rims accentuated by pristine canyon views and silence. They rode mules along scary inner-canyon paths to camp in the open anywhere they chose. Not a single law or regulation intruded on their experience, and they left reluctantly, knowing that they might never again be able to afford the time and cost to return.

After the turn of the century, self-sustaining entrepreneurs who had proven the canyon a viable commodity within their narrow spheres of influence gave way to railroad managers who sensed profit in monopoly and centralization. Many employees of the Santa Fe Railroad and Fred Harvey Company grew to love the canyon as much as their predecessors. Their customers, who arrived by rail and stayed at the luxurious El Tovar Hotel or the more frugal Bright Angel Lodge, still marveled at awe-inspiring vistas. But the experience had changed. The point at which discovery yields to creature comfort is indefinite, but traveling to a well-advertised destination in a Pullman sleeper and enjoying civilized amenities like leak-proof roofs and inter-

century. The railroad brought the Fred Harvey Company, the Harvey Girls, European chefs, and low-wage laborers to cater to upscale clientele, but they required nearly all of their employees to live in shanties and derailed boxcars, at best in tent cabins. Neither the Santa Fe Railroad nor the Fred Harvey Company supplied any community services or durable organization: no grocery stores, general merchandise stores, homes, churches, community centers, zoning, or law enforcement. These conditions were all manifestations of attracting a lot of people to one place at one time, combined with disdain for investments that did not return profits and the inability of an other-directed, underfunded U.S. Forest Service to do anything about it.



Figure 49. Superintendent Rob Arnberger, Grand Canyon Association President Robert Koons, and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt at the dedication of Roosevelt Point, North Rim, July 1996. Private partners like Grand Canyon Association figure prominently in strategies to implement the 1995 General Management Plan. GCR 13887; NPS photo by Mike Quinn.

national cuisine lies somewhere beyond that point. The Santa Fe Railroad offered a wider range of guided trips, some into the canyon by the same mules and hazardous trails earlier visitors had used, others along still-primitive rim roads in horse-drawn buggies. Since nearly

everyone arrived by rail, managers could predict numbers and ensure that accommodations met with everyone's approval. They also replaced the dilapidated accommodations of pioneer operators with visually pleasing architecture and brought a modicum of order to the South Rim.

Railroad managers provided more comfortable accommodations and services for the greater numbers of tourists they attracted, but also bared the seamier side of unregulated capitalism in the sprawling "resort" village they had spawned. One wonders if silence and unsullied canyon views entirely overcame the sight and stench of pit toilets, garbage dumps, open-air incinerators, free-ranging livestock, and mule barns that persisted from the nineteenth

The National Park Service reached Grand Canyon at an auspicious time in its own and the nation's history. The United States had won a war on others' battlefields and was poised to get down to business becoming the world's economic power. Industry was rich in innovations, among them the assembly line, mass advertising, and bulk production of affordable automobiles for an expanding middle class. The National Park Service hummed with the electricity of its youth. Its leaders embraced positivist ideals and fiercely advocated conservation while remaining astute businessmen. They had concurrent visions of the national parks as cultural icons, natural sanctuaries, and scenic commodities, but found far more willing allies for

the latter among legislators, businessmen, and influential citizens. NPS administrators had just embarked on their program of selling the parks to national and international consumers, who had begun to discover Grand Canyon with the railroads' help. At the same time administrators sold the need for improved access, accommodations, and other amenities to a willing federal government.

It is difficult to imagine how a progressive federal agency infused with the idealism, energy, and the clear goals of a startup enterprise in these political and economic atmospheres, yet lacking a clear ecological ethic, could have acted differently or done better at Grand Canyon National Park. After a few years of belt-tightening and experimentation, hand-picked managers with strong agency backing and near-unanimous popular support accomplished a great deal. They cleaned up the pioneer environment while building attractive administrative facilities, re-engineering roads and trails, organizing campgrounds, inventing educational programs, and eliminating private inholdings. They also overcame their economic partners' initial arrogance, ensured some measure of architectural conformity and zoning, and cajoled them into making massive investments in commu-

nity as well as tourist-related infrastructure. The park service accomplished this not by displacing the railroads who had superseded pioneer operators, but by fashioning a strong public-private alliance to pursue a grander scheme of exporting scenery to the entire world.

These civilizing efforts closed the gap on the experiential contrast between cities and parks, but were necessary to an arguable degree if pleasurable vacations were to be retained in the automotive era. A generation earlier, the railroad had effected a noticeable change in the manner in which tourists reached and experienced the park by affording a quicker, more comfortable ride from Williams and by catering to a known number of arrivals. Private vehicles effected a far more profound, longer-lasting revolution by placing decisions in the hands of individuals. The “sagebrushers” who came before World War II recaptured some of the adventure, certainly the freedom, of early explorers. They arrived by whatever road they chose, at any time, stayed beside the road or the rim, in camps if provided, or in lodges if the mood and pocketbook allowed. They could eat in restaurants or buy packaged food, partake in guided tours and interpretive talks or not, stay a month or move to another park after a few hours at the rim. Although it was soon evident that they would come in greater numbers than ever before and in the traditional summer season, exact volume, dates, and times of arrival became wholly unpredictable and uncontrolled.

Visitor demographics changed radically by the mid-1920s, but the park was able to adapt within fifteen years by rebuilding all manner of roads and providing more cost-effective, full-service campgrounds, motor lodges, cabins, and other auto-related services. Pleasure must have been mixed with annoyance during this period of adjustment. Motorists drove on incredibly dusty gravel roads before oil palliatives then pavement returned vistas to their former splendor in the mid-1930s. The amount of construction undertaken in the 1920s and early 1930s has hardly been exceeded since, and it created traffic problems and a steady din until natural silence also returned in the mid-1930s. Power plant and locomotive smoke would not have gone unnoticed, and a five-fold increase in the number of visitors, most in vehicles of their own, could not have helped. Road signs, rules, and regulations inevitably appeared, and for the first time restricted visitors’ actions for the sake of order. Still, black-topped roads, new utilities, accommodations of rustic architecture, and manicured landscapes courtesy of the CCC converged with diminished visitation during the depression to produce a few “golden years” when the park experience came closest to matching the illusory NPS ideal. Knowledgeable and courteous rangers, active community groups, cooperative efforts between administrators and concessioners, and world war prolonged the ideal

until 1945 when it all ended very abruptly.

From an experiential point of view, the next fifty-five years proved something of a worsening nightmare for nearly all except those interested in making money from an endless stream of scenic consumers. NPS and concession employees still worked and lived with each other in a civil, even affable manner, and enjoyed marginally better living conditions and community amenities than their predecessors, but the public-private partnership and relationship with visitors had otherwise changed. Nonresident but caring concession managers, who had once made it a point to visit the park regularly and participate in community affairs, gave way to absentee boards of directors. NPS managers also changed, adhering to mandated relations with their former partners while withdrawing from intimate contact with the visiting public in favor of more impersonal education and information, rules, regulations, and law enforcement. NPS and private-sector efforts to attract and please unlimited numbers of visitors coincided with the nation’s emergence as the world’s economic power, regional population growth, development, pollution, and technological innovations to reduce natural quiet, visual clarity, and solitary experiences. This was especially noticeable to visitors who crowded Grand Canyon Village, Bright Angel Point, and the scenic drives, points, and pullouts, but also became evident to backcountry users who could no longer entirely escape overflights, motorized rafts, air pollution, or others who fled the same intrusions as themselves.

Unfortunately, those who visit the park today cannot feel long-ago experiences and are likely to compare only contemporary differences between their city homes and the park environs—differences which are, in some places, no longer all that startling. The worst scenario is realized in the busiest weeks of the summer season by day users who spend their few hours at the park visiting Grand Canyon Village. Most still arrive from the southern gateway towns and are not well informed of where they are going and what to expect. They leave Interstate 40 at Flagstaff or Williams and follow columns of vehicles leading inexorably to the park’s south entrance. Along the way they pass a few hotels, restaurants, private campgrounds, billboards, budding residential developments, and “Bedrock City” (Valle) before encountering Tusayan—a quarter-mile gauntlet of commercial services beside an airport vibrant with the thump of helicopters and drone of airplanes. Those who intend to stay the night and have thought ahead likely as not have reservations here. Everyone by the next day queues up at the entrance station before continuing to the first canyon overlook at Mather Point, where an open parking space may be found only if it is early or late in the day.

From this point, most people continue west toward the village, passing the spur to Yavapai Observation Station

then turning right into the visitor center across from the Mather Business Zone where they pause, hoping to find a vacant place to park. Those who are crafty or patient snare one. Those who are wise orient themselves here and allow shuttles to ferry them about the village and along West Rim Drive before returning and driving out the way they came. Nearly all get back into their vehicles, however, and continue to the intersection with Village Loop Drive where confusion and irritation mount. The loop is counter-clockwise, though few are aware of it, and some turn left to its south side, passing the old Fred Harvey industrial zone before reaching a dead end at Maswik Lodge. Motorists who are not staying at the lodge or looking for a backcountry permit at the Maswik Transportation Center retrace their path but may turn right at Center Road and immediately leave the park by this shortcut. Many return to the original intersection, however, and join those who choose to drive straight ahead beyond the railroad depot into the old village proper.

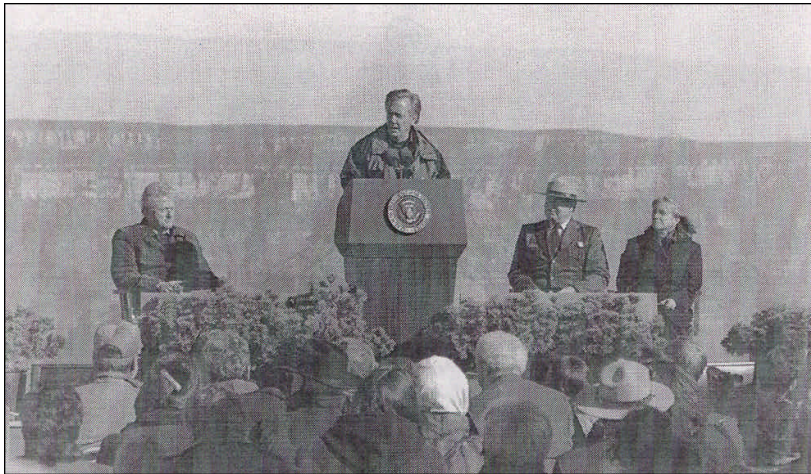


Figure 50. President Bill Clinton and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt at Hopi Point to formally announce the designation of Parashant National Monument, January 2000. Presidential proclamations of the Parashant and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments are initiatives toward environmental protection of relatively unpopulated areas in the Grand Canyon region. GRCA 18376; NPS photo by Mike Quinn.

Confusion along the north side of Village Loop stems from the fact that it is one-lane and one-way, with turnoffs into the El Tovar Hotel, Thunderbird, Kachina, and Bright Angel Lodges cloaked by a near-continuous shield of parallel-parked cars. Motorists are distracted by vehicles stopped in the middle of the road, by tame deer browsing the roadside, or by inattentive pedestrians. Those who miss their turn must circumnavigate the village before getting a second chance. Parking is very limited among these rimside facilities, and once motorists make the correct turn they do not find a space unless they're extremely lucky. More often they sit and wait with others, park illegally, or lose patience and re-enter the loop hoping to find one farther down the road.

Most eventually stumble upon and settle for one of two major parking lots, the closest to the rim located west of the railroad depot, the most spacious adjacent to the transportation center.

Once out of their vehicles, visitors are drawn as they have been since 1896 from the shallow depression of Bright Angel Wash up to the rim overlooking the canyon. The paved walkway from Kolb Studio to Verkamps is often congested, but those who take the time can stroll among junipers and ponderosa along canyon-view paths to the west as far as Hopi Point and east to Yavapai Point, capturing some semblance of solitude and quiet that has not yet been lost. There are four hotels, lodge cabins, a steak house, and two curio stores only fifty to a hundred feet back from the rim. Kolb Studio and Lookout Studio hang over the edge. But buildings seem more intrusive on the printed page than they are in reality. Some are historic structures of interesting architecture, others were built of modern materials but with aesthetic concern. It may be that the overall feel of the historic district complements the experience of the canyon itself, but whatever the reason, visitors afoot are in a better frame of mind than they are in their vehicles. And one can still turn northward at any point and gaze in astonishment down talus slopes and cliffs that parallel the Bright Angel Fault to Indian Garden and look across the canyon to Bright Angel Canyon and the North Rim, perhaps in a few moments offsetting the aggravation they endured to get here.

This is just a glimpse of today's worst visitor experience at peak season, the congestion inherent in attracting unlimited numbers of visitors, accommodating them in one place, and satisfying the need for creature comforts that coincides with summer vacations. It plagues, as it always has, only a small fraction of the park environs during a three- to five-month period of each year, and can easily be avoided with a little forethought. Most visitors today are day trippers, making the rounds of southwestern parks and monuments and spending only a few hours at Grand Canyon' edge to feel the rush, take a few photographs, and move on. They would be better served and a whole lot happier if they came in the autumn, winter, or early spring, or if they restricted their travel to entrance roads, East Rim Drive, and Cape Royal Road, which have long availed the best views and were arranged to avoid developed centers at both rims. But the search for overnight accommodations, or the simple fact that most do not know for sure where they are going, draws them into the vortex of Grand Canyon Village.

NPS planners since Daniel Hull and William Peters have directed most of their attention and appropriations to

the village. Their principal concern at first was to invent an orderly town from the early chaos surrounding the railway depot, later redeveloping the Wylie Way Camp at Bright Angel Point and the central corridor then adding facilities at Desert View, in each case trying to create then meet consumer demand with quality, low-cost services. Master planners through the early 1970s occasionally pondered facilities at Bass Camp, Manakacha Point, Grandview, Cape Royal, and elsewhere, but concessioner inclinations, dire economic conditions, world war, and environmental opinion helped stay the course of in-place expansion. NPS administrators and concessioners alone developed the plans of the first fifty years, acceding to nearly everyone's inclinations for more and modern services. At no time did park managers consider limiting visitation or seriously altering the manner in which tourists arrived at or experienced the park.

Management consensus ended by the 1970s with crowds reaching critical mass and with the passage of environmental legislation. Regional population growth, escalating visitation, and consequent problems continued to degrade the park experience. The National Park Service abdicated whatever environmental leadership role it may have held to more aggressive environmental groups and scientists, but did not entirely ignore these interests when it came time to write their next generation master plan. The planning process itself invited the opinions of special interests and the general public, and the blueprint emerging in 1976 reflected, for the first time, some concern for park ecology. But concern was more for the myriad problems that overpopulation, overvisitation, and overdevelopment had brought about. Goals for the first time included spreading development within adjacent public lands, slowing the growth of services within the park, and, most significantly, separating visitors from their vehicles with convenient and mandatory mass transit, pedestrian paths and districts, bicycle paths and rentals, and the resumption of rail service. No thought was given to holding the line on the number of visitors, however. The plan, in fact, called for management zones, zonal carrying capacities, and redistribution to efficiently squeeze more people in.

The 1976 Master Plan and 1977 Village Development Concept Plan were written in hesitant language, expressing a desire to do something different but an uncertainty over the ability to carry it out. By the early 1990s, very little had actually been done to curb past trends other than to build a few foot trails, add to the voluntary shuttle system, construct Maswik Transportation Center, and facilitate the return of Grand Canyon Railway. As visitation topped four million, transportation and visitor numbers remained major concerns when NPS officials began the scoping process for a new plan in 1991. Reflecting a new era of public input to

management planning, administrators held meetings in regional towns, considered the opinions of varied interests, and crafted five alternatives. Number One: Let existing facilities serve, with the likely result of further deterioration of the park experience and natural environment. Number Two: Allow demographic trends to persist then implement



a reservation system when deemed absolutely necessary. Number Three: Resurrect the 1976 intent to implement regional solutions, separate day users from their vehicles, and shift more facilities of all types to Tusayan. Number Four (the most aggressive ecological stance): Require construction of all new facilities and relocation of many existing ones outside the park while prohibiting all day-user vehicles from the South Rim. Number Five: Continue past policies of unlimited access and accommodation and build in-park facilities to meet demand. After lengthy public review and considerable comment, administrators chose the third alternative in 1995.

The crux of the 1995 General Management Plan is a concessioner-owned and -operated light-rail system that will carry day users from Tusayan to a new transportation center near Mather Point. Here, visitors may choose to view the canyon and return to Tusayan or continue on to the business zone and Grand Canyon Village via an enhanced shuttle system, by bicycle, or on foot. As in the 1976 plan, new roads will allow campers direct access to Mather Campground and Trailer Village; hotel guests may drive to Maswik Transportation Center where they will park and proceed by bus, bicycle, or afoot to Maswik Lodge and hotels along the rim. The main goal is to remove private vehicles from the South Rim, from Hermits Rest to Mather Point. Aside from addressing circulation, the plan also calls for a massive rehabilitation and construction program including employee housing in Grand Canyon

Figure 51. Parking at Grand Canyon Village is scattered and inadequate, aggravating traffic congestion and visitors alike. The 1995 GMP aims to eliminate more than half of the current number of motor vehicles by requiring day users to park in Tusayan, seven miles south of the park, and ride a light-rail system to the rim at Mather Point. GRCA 18047; NPS photo by Mike Quinn.

Village, Desert View, Bright Angel Point, and south of the park in Canyon Forest Village—the latter a substantial private development west of Tusayan that was recently approved.

This management plan is the most ambitious administrators have ever invented. It directly addresses—and may resolve, if implemented effectively—the challenge that has long been their first priority: improving most tourists' visits by returning to a less-congested environment in Grand Canyon Village. It will likely create other problems, however. Foremost, it is another in an unbroken line of structural approaches to visitor and employee accommodation, akin to Mission 66 but fifteen to twenty times more costly if fully realized. While most construction is planned within “already disturbed areas,” and the number of such “developed centers” (as they were once called) will not increase, the plan still adheres to the traditional dictum of building

An equally troubling aspect of the plan is its design to cram still more people into the park, as many as 7.5 million per year by 2010. That number is predicated on projected use at various points, calculating the length of time people spend along the rims (a few hours) with the assumption that if visitors arrive, circulate, and leave as planned, 40,000 people per day (22,500 at any one time) might be accommodated, as opposed to the present number of 25,000 per day (17,000 at one time). Visitors, in other words, have been reduced to units within a computer simulation model in which they are expected to circulate in a predictable manner. That may work, but even so, planners expect that the inconvenience imposed by making people leave their vehicles at Tusayan will cause more of them to avoid mass transit and the village. Instead, they will probably congest Desert View Drive on the South Rim and Bright Angel Point on the North Rim, requiring closure of Desert View

Drive's pullouts and spur roads to all but shuttle busses and accelerating the implementation of a North Rim reservation system. Administrators admit that even if this plan is implemented, reservation systems will still be required at both rims by 2010 when and if visitation exceeds 7.5 million. It therefore merely postpones a more difficult cure to the next generation of administrators, tourists, and businessmen.

Such concerns may be academic since no Grand Canyon master plan has ever been implemented in its original form. This one carries a \$300-million price tag, not including \$150 million required for the

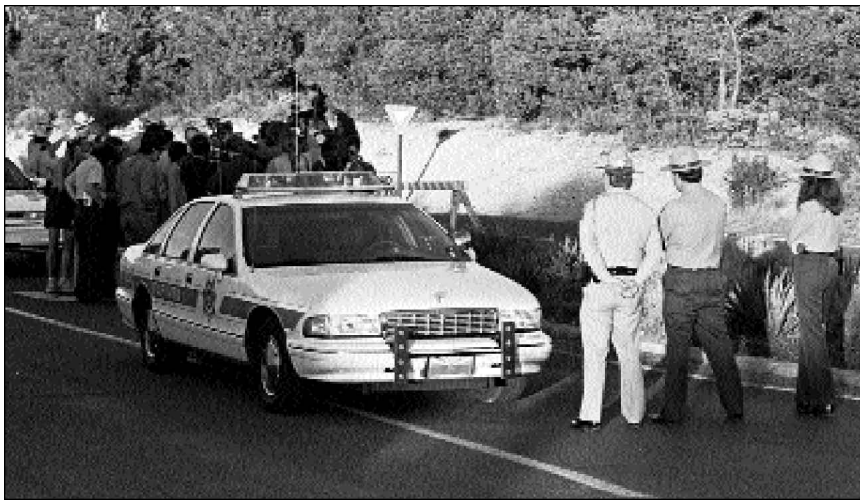


Figure 52. Arizona Governor Fife Symington holds a press conference along the South Entrance Road to protest the park's 1995 closure, with Superintendent Rob Anberger (center, right) looking on. GRCA 15229; NPS photo by David Haskell.

more to satisfy more people. The same structural mindset led the National Park Service to support Canyon Forest Village, or its lesser alternative of expanding the town of Tusayan (rejected in June 1999 by the

U.S. Forest Service in favor of the larger development), in order to redistribute some employee housing, community services, and commercial facilities a few miles south. Spreading the “wealth” of development in this manner will ease if not end the pressure to build within park boundaries, but it is no real solution. There will soon be four major developed areas—Tusayan, Canyon Forest Village, Grand Canyon Village, and the Mather Business Zone—bunched within seven miles of the South Rim. Considering historic urban development patterns, these may well come together in the next century to form a metropolitan “Grand Canyon City.”

private mass transit system. Recognizing that financing might prove the plan's downfall, the park created a three-person implementation team in 1995 that has spent most of its time trying to match funds with GMP projects. Congress allotted funds for nearly the entire \$25 million tab for Mission 66; it is expected to contribute less than 5 percent to implement the current plan. The shortfall will be made up by user and franchise fees, federal highway funds through the Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21), state highway appropriations, contributions from private corporations and non-profit organizations like Grand Canyon Association and Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, citizens' donations, grants, and a concessioner willing to invest in the transit system. Implementation is therefore proceeding in a piecemeal fashion, an approach that has not worked well in the past.

Administrators believe that financing will remain the principal obstacle to implementation, but there is reason to speculate that opposition will arise from South Rim conces-

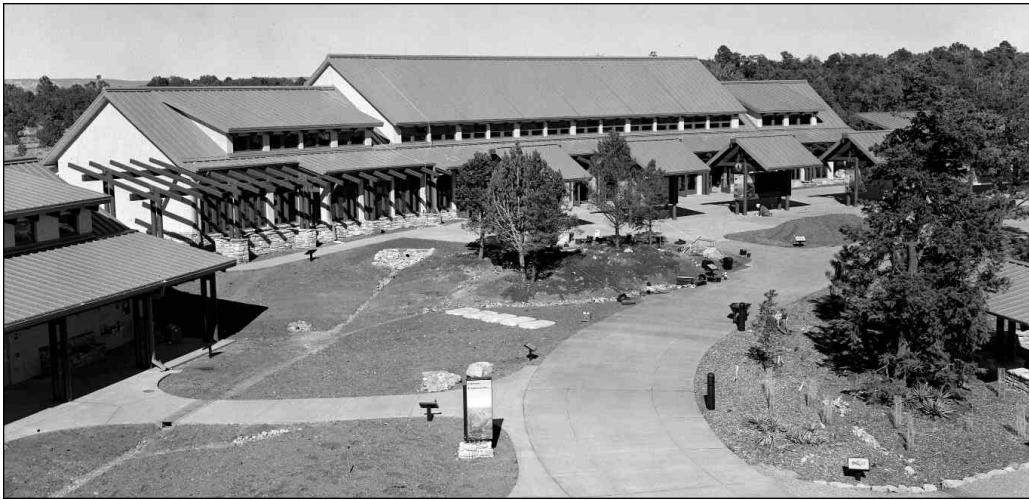


Figure 53. Finishing touches are applied to Canyon View Information Plaza (CVIP), prior to dedication, October 2000. CVIP will become the terminal point of the Tusayan-Mather Point light-rail service upon completion of the rail line ca. 2005. NPS photo by Mike Quinn.

sioners. Everyone who derives profit within the park is concerned about divorcing people from their vehicles and the effect it will have on business, since the convenient automobile also serves as a shopping cart. People afoot will likely buy less, and a plan-induced consumer traffic pattern cannot be predicted. AmFac has the most to lose. The park expects the company to invest more than \$100 million to refurbish, relocate, and build new facilities, but, as in 1930 when the depression scuttled Fred Harvey Company plans and in the 1950s when congressional and NPS policy shifts caused the company to balk, AmFac may resist capital improvements. The plan calls for costly renovations of old dormitories to low-cost visitor rooms, removal of the still-serviceable Kachina and Thunderbird Lodges from the rim, and (at most) an additional 100 rooms at Maswik Lodge, none of which sits well with the concessioner. Acrimonious contract negotiations do not help matters, and it is uncertain what a new corporation, if one can be found, might have in mind, given trends to reduce in-park services and escalating competition outside the park.

Economic and demographic uncertainties, inevitable limitations in the near future, and recent historical trends toward environmental protection beg the question of why the National Park Service did not adopt a cheaper, less structural plan linked to a reservation system, facility downsizing, and reduced visitation. The world's users of recreational facilities have grown accustomed to limitations and have accepted reservation systems for Grand Canyon backpacking and rafting adventures. Motorists would probably prefer such a system to being forced to leave their vehicles in Tusayan. The park service, although it has based its entire existence on the principle of unlimited accommodation, has recently realized the necessity of some restrictions to save the parks. A reservation system, necessary only in summer months for the foreseeable future, would probably balance the seasonal distribution of visitors, a goal long sought by

administrators. Many NPS personnel, at least those in close contact with today's harried visitors, are fed up with crowd control and would enjoy a return to the more intimate, constructive relationship that existed prior to World War II. Conservation and preservation groups would no doubt support such a plan, or consider it a positive step in the right direction.

Part of the explanation for not implementing a reservation system is found in the paling though persistent NPS culture of building to meet the demands of the world's scenic consumers, consistent with democratic ideals of open access and the profit-making potential of in-park concessions. But most of the explanation lies in the increasing importance of international tourists to the Southwest's economic health, reflecting the extent to which the region has been ensnared by the web of world capitalism. Businessmen in Arizona, Utah, and adjacent states simply do not want a ceiling placed on the number of tourists who may visit the region's primary scenic attraction because it will reduce dollars dropped in gateway towns along the way. Congressmen respond to both commercial and noncommercial special interests, but popular backing for fixed limits, though growing, has not yet translated into the necessary political support.

Sadly, even if such a plan is someday implemented, it would only help sustain an island of natural sanity for a while longer while placing greater pressure on adjacent public lands. Limits to visitation will not overcome external threats to Grand Canyon National Park occasioned by regional population growth, development, and pollution. Real answers do not lie in congressional decisions, the efficacy of one federal bureau, or environmental compromises. They lie somewhere beyond the present world system wherein corporations are concerned only for capital accumulation, human wants rather than needs are considered paramount, and nature is cherished only for its economic value.