

Protecting Navajo History & Resources in the General Southwest

- Cassidy Morgan, Programs and Project Specialist
- Erik Stanfield, Sr. Anthropologist

Navajo Nation Heritage and Historic
Preservation Department
Window Rock, Arizona



Our Presentation

- 1. Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM)
 - Dzil Biinidzi'gaa (white streaked mountains)
- 2. Bears Ears National Monument (BENM)
 - Shashjaa (bears ears)
- 3. Baaj Nwaavj I'tah Kukven Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument (BNIK)
 - Nihi Kek'eh haza (our footprints rest here)
- 4. Final Words...Naasgo...

1. Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Presidential Proclamation 10286

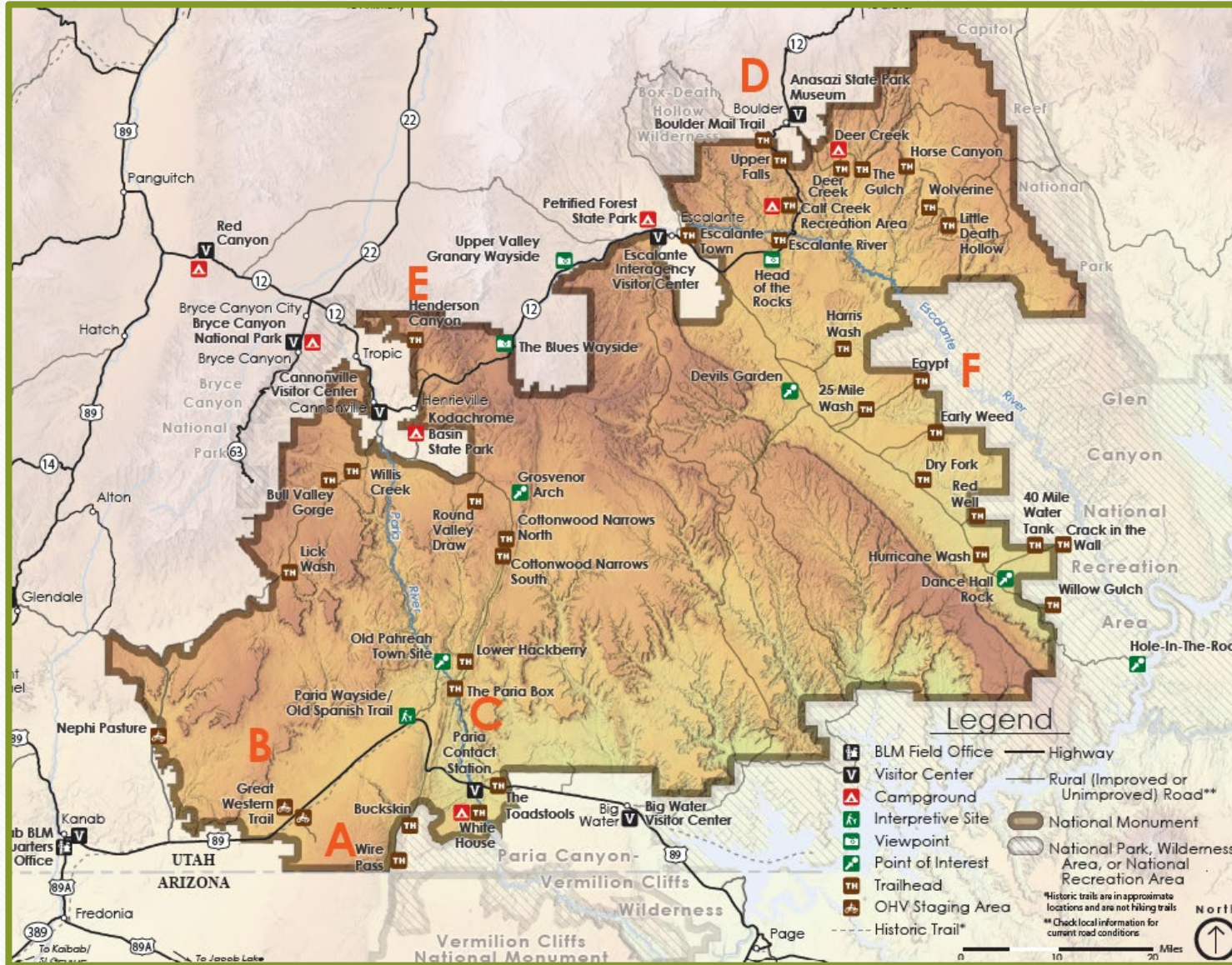
- 1.87 million acres
- Biological, archaeological, paleontological, resources
- Scientific research, education and exploration
- Initially est. in 1996 by Clinton
 - Trump reduced it in 2017 by 47%

Located in Southern Utah



Navajo Activities at the Monument

- Very little oral traditions recorded for the Monument
 - What stories do you have?
 - What Navajo names do you have for this monument, or places within the monument
- Navajo Nation Air Tour of GSENM
 - Erik Stanfield
 - Hank Stevens
- Navajo Nation visit to the Monument, November 2022
 - Consultation about the monument's activities
 - Richard M. Begay, Dep't Manager
 - Erik Stanfield, Anthropologist
 - Hank Stevens, MAC member



Navajo Place Names

- A. *Nát'oh Dził*
(Tobacco Plateau)
- B. *Tsé Nineež Łichíí' Dah Nást'ání*
(Long Red Mesa)
- C. *Tsé Łichíí' Naneez'á*
(Red Indentation)
- D. *Dził Nineež*
(Boulder Mountain)
- E. *Dził Binii' Łigaii*
(Mountain with White Face)
- F. *Tsénii' Hadiiyol*
(Escalante Canyon)

Translation Credit: Darlene Adakai-Smith

Navajo History

- Monument recognizes Navajos have lived, hunted, and migrated thorough there
 - Interpretation
 - Physical remains of Navajo presence
 - Navajo traditional uses – hunting, plant and mineral gathering, travel (trails), etc.



At least two Navajo Sites, NE of Kanab



2. Bears Ears National Monument (BENM)

- Early advocacy by Navajo grassroots organizations
- Est. 2016 by Obama (Proclamation 9558) - first to formally establish Tribal-Federal collaborative management for a national monument
 - 2017: Trump reduces by 85%
 - 2021: Reinstated by Biden
- 1.36 million acres
- Cultural, ceremonial, archaeological, biological, paleontological resources



Diné Connections

- Dozens of known Navajo habitations (hogans, sweat lodges, corrals, etc)
- Ceremonial connections (Blessing Way, Shooting Way, Night Way, etc.)
- Hunting, trading, seasonal migrations



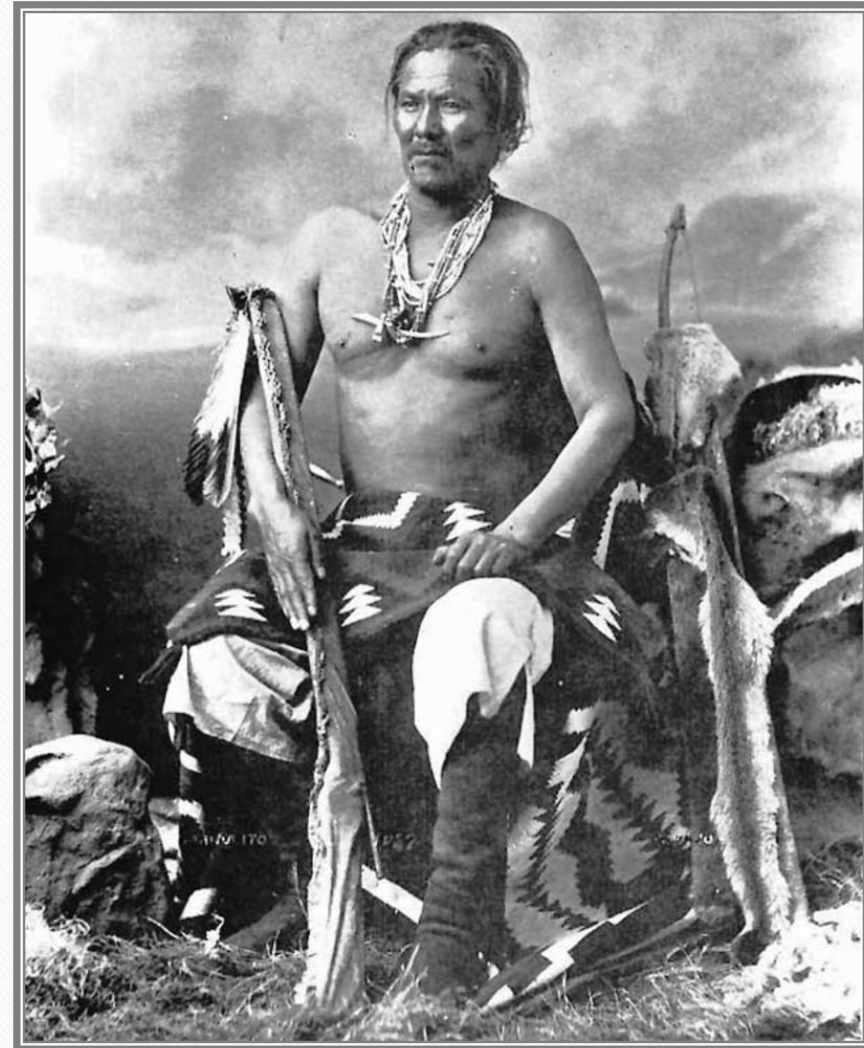


Diné Place Names

- Bears Ears Buttes:
Shashjaa'
- Abajo Mountains:
Dził Dóótl'izh
- San Juan River: Tooh
- Comb Ridge: Tséyik'áán
- Cottonwood Wash:
T'iis Bikooh

Clan Connections - Dóone'é

- Tábaqhá - Water's Edge People
- Hashk'aan Hadzohí - Yucca Fruit Strung Out People
- Bit'ahnii - Folded Arms Clan
 - **Manuelito** born at Bears Ears
- Tl'áashchí'í - Red Bottom People
- Ts'ah Yisk'idnii — Sage Brush Hill Clan
- Tsi'naajinii - Black Streaked Wood



Plant Gathering

- Four Corners Potato



Pinon

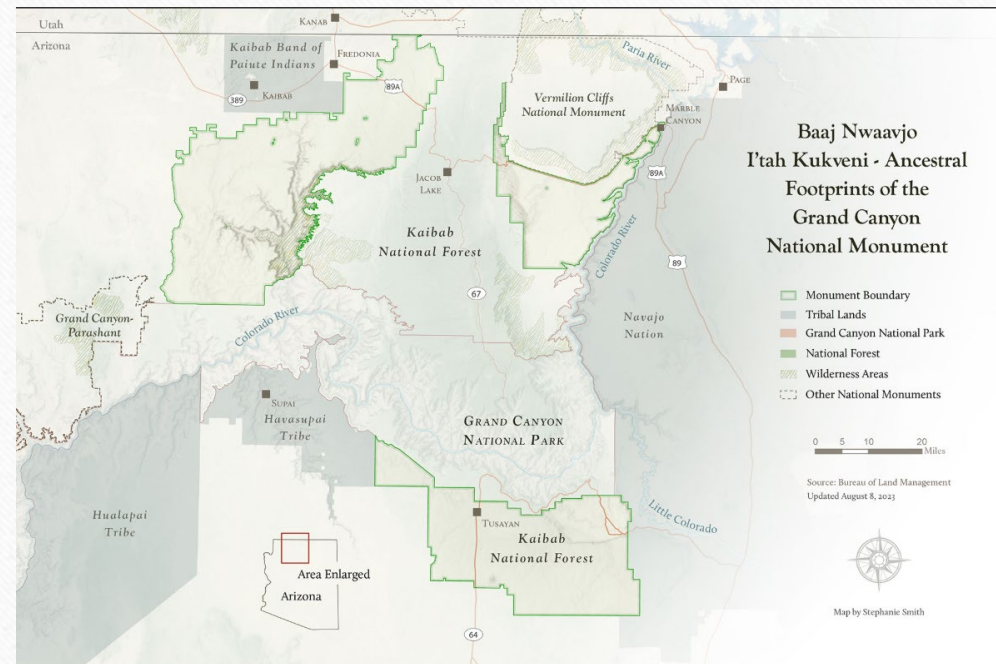


Rabbitbrush



3. Baaj Nwaavj* I'tah Kukven** Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument (BNIK)

- Created August 8, 2023, President Biden Proclamation (3 units)
- 917,618 Acres, Managed by BLM and USFS Kaibab National Forest
- Proclamation created Tribal Commission (13 tribes); Navajo Nation is a member; Richard Begay is the NN Commissioner
- *Where the indigenous people roam (Paiute) ** Our ancestral footprints (Hopi)



Navajo Support for BNIK

- Navajo Nation Actively Supported the Creation of the Monument
- Commission established Plan of Operation in 2025
 - In Washington DC 4/13-17/26 to advocate for its protection
- Quarterly meetings; virtual or in-person



We Honor our History and Cultural Lifeways

In the southern area, visible for miles in all directions, rises Red Butte, a towering landmark that is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places as a traditional cultural property. Called Wii'i Gdwiisa by the Havasupai and Tsé zhin Ii'ahi by the Navajo, it is defined by an eroded rock and basalt cap from ancient lava and is sacred to the Havasupai, Hualapai, Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni Peoples. Red Butte and the surrounding area are central to Tribal creation stories, and dense concentration of flaked stone tools and pottery provide evidence of thousands of years of human habitation there. Additionally, more recent Navajo and Havasupai encampments in the area date to the early to middle 1900s. South of Red Butte, Gray Mountain, called Dzilbeeh by the Navajo, is mentioned in Navajo ceremonial songs, stories, and rituals, and has long served as a refuge for the Navajo people.



4. Finally, We Protect these Places for Our Children and Grand Children

- We learn where we came, we remember the place names, the landscape
- We learn who we are as a People, we learn about our clans
- We learn about our ceremonies, our healing plants and places of healing
- We put our sovereignty to work when we remember our history and work with federal agencies to protect these places
- This lands, these three monuments, and other places are who we are

Issues to Work on...

- Interpretation
- Management documents – EIS
- Access to resources
 - Hunting (AZ G&F), plants, firewood, minerals
- Identification of cultural resources, esp. burials, sacred places
- Documenting Navajo histories of the monuments
- **If you have knowledge of these areas, or have family history here, please let us know!**
- Ahehee

Questions? Ahehee'

Cassidy Morgan, Erik Stanfield

Navajo Nation Heritage and Historic Preservation
Department

PO Box 4950 Window Rock, AZ 86515

Tel: 928-871-7198

Website: <https://hpd.navajo-nsn.gov>

Richard M. Begay, Department Manager

