



Chapter Five

Infrastructural Last Hurrah

1956 - 1975

In the mid-1950s National Park Service administrators, disheartened for a decade by visitor complaints, media critics, and their own perception of deteriorating buildings, roads, and trails, finally gained political support to launch a massive structural improvement program named Mission 66. Proponents envisioned a systemwide effort to catch up with administrative needs and provide more and better tourist facilities, posing the program's end date to coincide with the bureau's fiftieth anniversary. But construction did not end in 1966, since visitation surpassed projections and almost no one thought to reconsider fundamental policies of unlimited accommodation. The building spree, undeterred by war or financial depression and incited by the vacationing middle-class, continued at some western parks well into the 1980s. At Grand Canyon, construction of visitor services actually accelerated after 1966 and did not subside until 1983, belatedly catching up with Mission 66 objectives but once again far in arrears of consumer demand. Meanwhile, administrators' focus on development angered others more concerned with external threats to the park's integrity, which helped trigger the modern environmental movement and erode managerial consensus.

Mission 66, as envisioned by NPS director Conrad Wirth at its onset in July 1956, aimed to “wipe out the deficit in park staffs, facilities and maintenance that had been accumulating since the outbreak of World War II and to move ahead of the rising tide of public use.”¹ Superintendents' wish lists—reviewed, edited, and approved by regional and headquarters staffs—were translated into “prospectuses” for each of the National Park Service's 181 units, which in turn became the mainstays of individual master plans.²

Preceded by a year and a half of intensive preparation and aided by congressional funding that increased handsomely in each succeeding year, administrators completed much of what they set out to do by the target date, even though additional park units, inflation, and conservative visitor forecasts bloated the program beyond its initial \$460 million scope to approximately \$1 billion.³ During the first seven years alone the NPS built or rebuilt 100 visitor centers, 250 administrative and utility buildings, 650 single-family employee residences, and 122 employee dormitories

and apartment houses; more than 300 campgrounds with nearly 17,000 sites, 170 picnic areas, 50 campfire circles, 630 road- and trail-side exhibits, and 150 comfort stations; 578 miles of roads, 413 miles of trails and paths, and 1,080 parking lots; 360 water, sewer, and power systems; and two training centers, along with thousands of minor administrative structures.⁴ The building frenzy raised the annual cost of maintaining the parks from \$9.1 million in 1956 to \$21.6 million in 1964. Reflecting on Mission 66 achievements in 1976, Wirth judged that catching up to visitor demand represented the program's significant accomplishment. From another perspective, it further reinforced management bias toward structural solutions to visitor accommodation in an era when many Americans had grown weary of runaway western development.⁵

Grand Canyon's Mission 66 Prospectus fit perfectly within overall program objectives. Local administrators' highest priority was to provide, as they had always tried to provide, “physical facilities and staff to care for existing and

projected use.” Major problems, identified within fixed assumptions that more and more modern services must be supplied to an unrestricted number of consumers, included an “outmoded physical plant” designed and developed during the railroad era, a substandard road system impeded by a maze of railroad tracks in the heart of the village, and severely limited parking. Other challenges covered the spectrum of human needs and past park concerns, including inadequate staffing, housing, utilities, maintenance, campsites, interpretive services, protection of park features, insufficient overnight accommodations and restaurants, and village congestion. The sweeping answer entailed more (and decentralized) development, but water remained a fundamental roadblock. Summarily, park staff concluded that

the answer is this simple—to keep pace with visitation we must find more water. If additional supplies are found we should decentralize. If, on the other hand no new sources of water are made available, we need not decentralize, and the limits on accommodations for visitors will be automatic. In that case from an operational sense the park will have to be geared predominantly to day use

But administrators, like all park boosters, had no intention of letting water interfere with development.

The blueprint for decentralization resembled Stephen Mather’s 1919 concept as well as Conrad Wirth’s contemporary model of concentrated developments and improved backcountry access. Anticipating an appropriations windfall and determined to redistribute the visitational load, Superintendent John McLaughlin immediately went ahead with development of a new “Mather Business Zone” less than a mile east of the old village and planned to expand facilities at Desert View, Indian Garden, Phantom Ranch, Bright Angel Point, and within Grand Canyon National Monument. These developments consisted of those traditionally supplied by the National Park Service: more campgrounds, campfire circles, and comfort stations; information, interpretation, and protection buildings; and parking lots, utilities, and service roads. Ranging beyond developed areas, managers laid plans for paved and graded gravel roads to penetrate remote sites like Havasupai Point and Signal Hill, Point Sublime, Tiyo Point, Cedar Mountain, and Toroweap Overlook. Looking to encourage and distribute inner-canyon use as well, they intended to reconstruct the Bright Angel, Kaibab, Hermit, Grandview, Tanner, Tonto (Hermit to Grandview), and Lava Falls Trails and place ranger cabins or trailside shelters along most inner-canyon paths.⁷

Grand Canyon’s prospectus, like systemwide plans, also called for an across-the-board boost in personnel, housing, utilities, and amenities required to manage 1,750,000 annual

visitors by 1966. Peak daily visitation was expected to reach 16,000 by that year, with an overnight population of visitors and employees cresting at 10,000. Plans called for steady increases in management and protection staffing during 1956–66 from twenty-four to forty permanent personnel with the number of seasonal employees rising from thirty-eight to sixty-three full time equivalents (FTEs). Similar growth was forecast for maintenance and rehabilitation, which would increase from twenty to thirty-two permanent employees and twenty-five to forty-four seasonal FTEs.⁸ Excluding salaries and benefits, administrators expected base funding for management and protection to swell from \$221,000 in 1956 to \$414,000 in 1966, while maintenance and rehabilitation would increase from \$173,000 to \$398,000. Costs to expand water, sewer, solid waste, propane, power, and telephone systems to accommodate new staff were included in estimates to supply such services to visitors. Projects planned strictly to better employee living conditions included a new community building, hospital, two playgrounds, thirty-three two- and three-bedroom homes including a new superintendent’s residence, twenty-five multiple-housing units for permanent employees, 118 multiple units for seasonals, and two trailer parks. The price tag for the entire program would top \$25 million, an amount of money beyond past managers’ dreams but deemed appropriate by regional and headquarters administrators.⁹

Grand Canyon’s Mission 66 Prospectus quickly became the park’s master plan.¹⁰ Since they first appeared in 1930, such plans had merely outlined developmental schemes, serving as building guidelines as money became available for specific projects. Given national priorities, year-to-year appropriations, and changing tastes of superintendents, regional managers, and directors, these plans had never been implemented without frequent revision and considerable downsizing, particularly when it came to decentralizing and opening remote regions to the average vacationing family. The Mission 66 blueprint proved different as it was a well-funded, well-executed, multiple-year plan that continued without interruption, though with many alterations, into the 1970s and did effect a partial shift away from corridor development to dispersed facilities at Desert View and the new village commercial center.¹¹ It also heralded a departure from NPS Rustic architecture to the Mission 66 style, characterized by today’s architects as “simple, boxy, functional designs,” progressive in materials and technology, cheaper and quicker to build, but inconsonant with natural environments and quick to deteriorate.¹²

The Grand Canyon Visitor Center, completed in February 1957 at a cost of \$437,000, served as the focal point of decentralization. It was the first structure built within the new business zone during 1957–70, and the first

NPS visitor center completed during the Mission 66 years. One of more than forty centers designed by architect Cecil Doty, it was intended as the first administrative building visitors would encounter along the new South Entrance Road, thereby taking most of the interpretive burden away from Yavapai Observation Station. It would also provide quarters for the chief naturalist, U.S. commissioner, and South Rim ranger district employees, as well as space for the park's scientific collections, library, darkroom, and auditorium.¹³ Relocation of NPS services to the business zone included Mather Campground (opened in 1960 with 238 campsites); the park's first, 193-pad "trailer village" (opened in 1961, under Fred Harvey Company management); and an amphitheater near the visitor center, completed in May 1961.¹⁴ Consistent with their new role as sole utility providers, administrators contracted with the Arizona Mining Supply Corporation of Prescott to extend water and sewer lines to the new developed area in 1957. They temporarily ensured its water supply by building two two-million-gallon storage tanks and one 300,000-gallon tank in 1957, and another three-million-gallon tank in 1961.¹⁵

Initial projections for increased staff were met during 1956-65, although the actual ratio of permanent to seasonal personnel leaned more heavily to the former than had been forecast, and the park took on more responsibilities than it had planned, including operation of the Albright Training Center, completed in 1963.¹⁶ Headcount increased steadily each year from sixty-nine permanent and sixty seasonal employees in 1956 to ninety-five and ninety in 1965. Visitation, however, also rose from a little more than one million in 1956 to 1.8 million in 1966, which sustained a postwar trend away from casual, personal interaction with visitors toward impersonal informational services, traffic control, and law enforcement.¹⁷ The "disproportionate expenditure of time" spent on the latter duty was not entirely attributed to an increased number of unruly visitors. In 1961 administrators wrote, with prejudice, that the village experienced

all of the police problems oftown reaching a population of 7500 persons...[and] magnified by the fluctuating park vis

itation; the low calibre, itinerant, seasonal employee; the presence ofacial groups exemplified by four diffent Indian Tribes;and numerous Spanish-American. [NPS rules] are entirely foreign to some ofthese peopleand the accepted facets ofgood citizenship are often absent.

They added that the two hundred employees working the Orphan uranium mine participated in "activities which require surveillance and control," and that a policy of fingerprinting concessioners' seasonal employees was well in place. By 1960 all rangers had been appointed deputy county sheriffs, two serving as deputy U.S. marshals, and the park had acquired a U.S. commissioner to try federal cases, although most miscreants were still processed through local justices and the county superior court.¹⁹

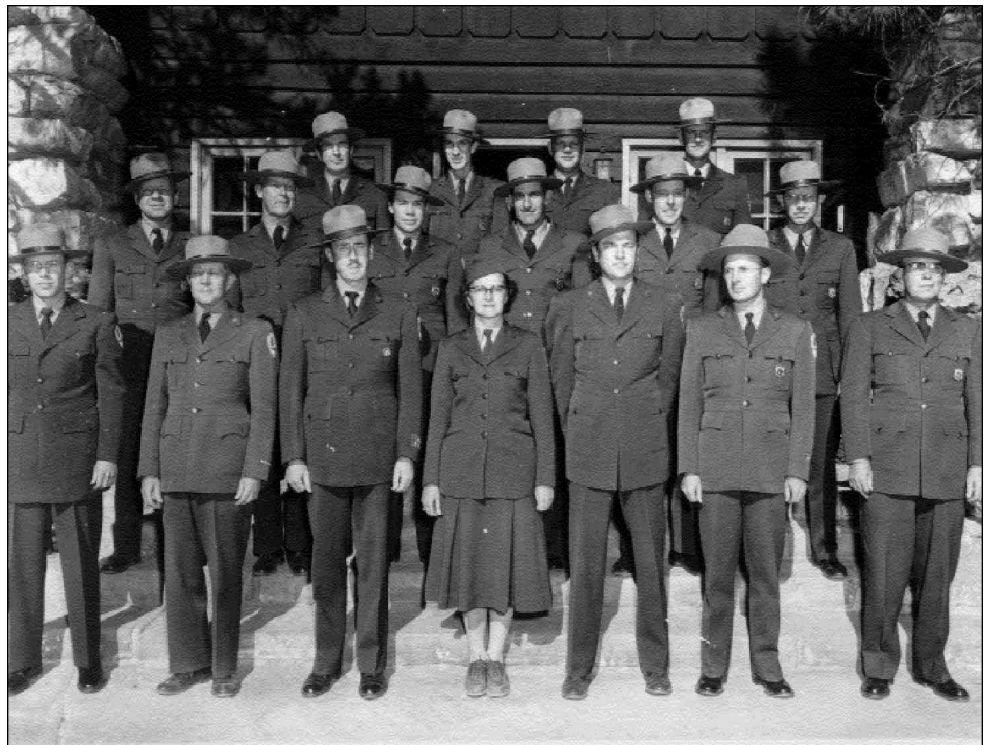


Figure 37. Uniformed personnel, April 1956. Left to right, rear: Assistant Superintendent Charles Shevlin, ranger Lloyd Hoena, District Ranger Joe Lynch, ranger Phil Iversen. Middle: Assistant Chief Ranger Pete Schuft, Assistant Naturalist Willard Dilley, District Ranger Joe Rumburg, rangers Vernon Ruesch and Dan Davis, Chief Ranger Lynn Coffin. Front: biologist Bob Bendt, naturalist Louis Schellhuth, Superintendent John McLaughlin, clk-stenographer Louise Hinchliffe, Management Assistant Sve Leding, ranger Clyde Maxey, and Chief Ranger Carl Lehner. GRCA 3196.

In response to the needs of its employees, the park lagged far behind projections and actual need as did the rest of the National Park Service. During the first six years of Mission 66, contractors erected only two four-unit apartment buildings in the village, one each in 1957-58 and 1960-61, and two three-bedroom homes, one each in the same years. The residential area began to creep southward from

the original avenues of the 1924 village plan, but a lack of homes required many permanent and still more seasonal employees to take up "temporary" residence in the trailer village. Other employee services fared better. The park's first high school was completed in 1958, which consisted of a central gymnasium surrounded by administrative offices and nine classrooms for grades 7-12. Two additional buildings to the east accommodated grades K-6.²⁰ Continuing in the spirit of Mission 66, park administrators and residents solicited funds nationwide to build the village's first formal church, the nondenominational Shrine of Ages (completed in 1970). They also helped fund a new hospital, today's clinic building, in 1968.²¹

New and expanded responsibilities assumed since World War II, including law enforcement, protection of natural resources near developed areas, and construction, maintenance, and operation of utilities, confused management's mission to some degree and certainly drained its resources. This mostly unplanned financial strain, along with construction priorities linked to visitor use along the rims and central corridor, accounted in large part for the abandonment of plans for most development outside the corridor, including improvements to remote inner-canyon trails. The trail crew kept after standard maintenance required by frequent landslides, erosion, and heavy wear along corridor paths, but no major reconstruction took place during 1956-75, and no trailside shelters or ranger stations were erected. Disintegrating backcountry trails were instead improved (and occasionally realigned) almost entirely through visitor use once backpacking became a popular pastime in the 1970s.

Original Mission 66 plans to improve backcountry access by building new roads and upgrading old ones were abandoned, probably as a result of higher than anticipated costs for village projects, but also due to systemwide criticism for overdevelopment that escalated in the early 1960s. In any event, administrators, no longer as interested in attracting visitors as in accommodating more, larger, and faster vehicles, had enough to do planning the reconstruction of principal circulation routes. In fact, consideration was given to one-way highways that would funnel traffic from the south and east entrances through the village and out again via an exit road to U.S. 66 emanating from the road to Topocoba Hilltop. Actual road improvements, however, addressed refurbishment and minor realignment of existing highways.²²

The South Entrance Road was no sooner finished than contracts had to be let to replace faulty surfacing and reconfigure its confusing intersection with East Rim Drive. Aspects of this contract, completed in 1956-57, included roadside landscaping, traffic islands at the Yavapai Spur and East Rim intersections, and masonry curbing along with

construction of the visitor center parking lot and placement of flagstone near the Visitor Center entrance. Traffic congestion and the need for additional parking by the late 1960s required realignment of the entrance road to its present path a few dozen yards south of the visitor center, completed in 1970-71. This project included all of today's landscaped traffic islands in the business zone, the walkway connecting the visitor center to today's bank and general store, and the masonry wall south of the business center parking lot.²³

East Rim Drive (today's Desert View Drive) had been built in the late 1920s along unfavorable alignments due to topography as well as Martin Buggeln's obstructive inholding. With a speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour, East Rim Drive served smaller, slower prewar vehicles and less-hurried visitors well enough, but its narrow surface, thirty-degree curves, and 8 percent grades plagued the postwar generation of visitors. Minimal improvements were effected in 1942, but significant upgrades to curves, grades, surface widths, and alignments, as well as new scenic pullouts, spur roads to scenic points, and parking lots, did not occur until Mission 66. In a series of three projects, BPR engineers reconstructed nearly the entire roadway with pullouts and spur roads during 1956-63. The new highway, widened to twenty-two feet and easing the most severe grades and curves, was engineered to speeds of sixty miles per hour, though the limit was raised only to forty-five. In conjunction with these projects, NPS workmen built and placed twenty-one redwood traffic signs. In line with trends toward self-interpretation, they also installed nine exhibit panels designed by park naturalists, financed by Grand Canyon Natural History Association, and built by Bill Chapman of Gardiner, Montana, within five exhibit kiosks of native stone, timber, and glass. The original 1934 masonry-and-log east entrance station was a casualty of the road projects, replaced by box-shaped structures consonant only with postwar architectural economy.²⁴

West Rim Drive (today known as Hermit Road), well built and less heavily traveled than other South Rim roads, was not reconstructed at this time but received better maintenance after the early 1950s. The North Entrance Road, although it required significant improvements, received none during Mission 66 because north side funding was considered of lesser priority. By the time money became available in the late 1960s, disagreements among engineers and landscape architects concerning environmental impacts postponed actual work until 1982-84, when the entire road was rebuilt with new culverts and underdrains, subgrade improvements, and surfacing. Cape Royal Road and its spur to Point Imperial were reconstructed during 1959-63 but, like all north side roads, was built atop original alignments to avoid environmental damage. Contractors improved the

subgrade and drainage features while widening the wearing surface and expanding parking areas and scenic pullouts. Nearly a dozen new or improved parking areas were added along the main road and spur. Upon completion, the same team that had produced the interpretive structures along East Rim Drive created seven interpretive panels that were installed in three new exhibit structures at Vista Encantada, Painted Desert, and Walhalla Overlooks.²⁵

Despite realignment of the South Entrance Road, reconfiguration of its East Rim Drive intersection, and decentralization of administrative services to the new business zone, the number of motorists entering the village continued to increase. Administrators could do little to ease traffic and parking congestion other than erect unsightly barricades because they were limited by the placement of buildings, topography, zoning, and the Santa Fe Railroad's right-of-way. In 1968-71 day laborers built the one-way, ten-foot-wide "Motor Lodge By-Pass Road" through the industrial zone, which allowed quicker passage through the village. In 1969 Superintendent Stricklin designated the north half of Village Loop a one-way street from the El Tovar driveway as far as the bypass road, which opened up parallel parking and eliminated two-way confusion in front of rim hotels and restaurants. With cessation of all rail traffic by 1972, Stricklin convinced the Santa Fe Railroad to allow construction of a large, gravel-surfaced parking lot atop the tracks west of the depot. These measures served to mitigate congestion, but only temporarily, as the number of vehicles circling the village mounted in ensuing years.²⁶

While the National Park Service rebuilt roads to facilitate traffic flow and accommodate faster, more varied types of vehicles, it tackled the water problem that had imperiled structural expansion since the pre-park era. The Indian Garden solution had helped through the late 1930s and still served well, but even before the war, post-depression demands required occasional water deliveries via rail that resumed in the late 1940s and continued sporadically into the late 1960s.²⁷ With decentralization to the Mather Business Zone and Desert View, visitation approaching two million, and the imminent demise of rail service, it became increasingly evident that a system originally built to sustain steam locomotives, a tightly enclosed village, and less than a half-million visitors, and which strained the capacity of the springs at Indian Garden, would no longer suffice. Tanks placed at the business zone raised storage capacity to thirteen million gallons by 1968, but continued shortages required that additional water be found and distributed to multiple rim locations.²⁸

Concerns over additional water had actually arisen with western reservoir projects of the 1930s, when NPS attorneys began to submit applications under state laws to protect the water rights of individual park units, including Grand

Canyon National Park and Monument.²⁹ Before 1941 the Santa Fe Railroad, park managers, and engineers began to formulate plans and cost estimates for alternative systems, all of which involved piping water from some inner-canyon source to Indian Garden, thence up the old pipeline. In 1941 one alternative entailed diverting Bright Angel Creek a quarter mile north of Phantom Ranch, piping it by gravity across the Colorado River to the mouth of Pipe Creek, and there building a pump house sufficient to deliver the water to Indian Garden. Another involved tapping the east fork of Haunted Creek Spring (at an elevation of 4350 feet) and piping the water by gravity to Indian Garden. Before the war, the latter alternative was preferred for its lower cost (in 1941, \$365,000) and operational economy. After the war preference was given to a system that would power a hydroelectric plant at Phantom Ranch as well as deliver water to Indian Garden. None of these ideas were implemented because administrators considered water to be a railroad responsibility, and railroad managers reasoned that it was

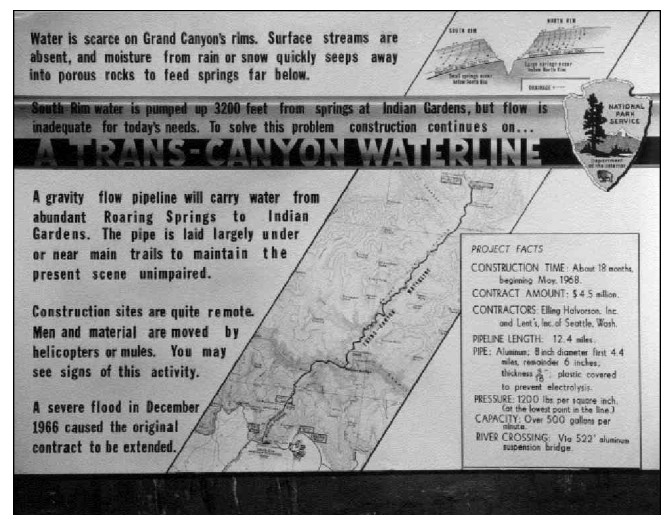


Figure 38. Interpretive sign at Grand Canyon Village in the late 1960s. GCR A 4778.

cheaper to haul supplemental water from Flagstaff at \$3.00 per thousand gallons.³⁰

In 1965, with the donation of the North Rim water system by the Union Pacific Railroad and responsibility for production in NPS hands, the park settled on a plan to transport water from Roaring Springs.³¹ In that year contractors began to build seven footbridges across Bright Angel Creek and the "silver bridge" across the Colorado River to carry a 12.5-mile gravity pipeline from the Roaring Springs pump house to Indian Garden. One of the worst thunderstorms in park history flooded Bright Angel Creek and destroyed most of the system as it neared completion in December 1966, requiring a massive cleanup effort before work could be restarted and the waterline re-engineered to better withstand floods.³² As completed in

1970, the transcanyon pipeline could deliver 190 million gallons annually to the South Rim. Usage would increase steadily, however, to 136 million gallons in 1973 and 183 million gallons in 1985, requiring equipment upgrades and a new pipeline from Indian Garden to transport still more water.³³

KEEPING UP WITH VISITOR DEMANDS

As the park assumed greater infrastructural responsibilities, concessioners were able to focus on more lucrative tourist services. Administrators perceived a need to increase and decentralize these services, especially lodging and meals, in order to ease congestion. To better effect their intentions, they developed a more integrated planning process consisting of specific concession commitments within the first years of new contracts, flexible (though more time-consuming) architectural review, and coordination of service road and utility construction with concessioner developments. The new process made sense but proved too cumbersome and time-consuming to keep up with pressures from increased visitation. Development was therefore guided more by malleable intentions than fixed plans. These included removing commercial facilities from the canyon's very edge and continuing to provide a range of rooms, cabins, and meals serving lower- to upper-middle income consumers. Park managers, prodded by Congress and critics of concession policy, also hoped to receive more income from franchise fees, although adequate, modern, reasonably priced services remained of higher priority.

Ideas for the North Rim that reflected initial enthusiasm for expanded services and decentralization were immediately deflated by the concessioner's unwillingness to invest in more buildings as well as arguments within the National Park Service itself concerning overdevelopment. In order to fulfill their end of the NPS-concessioner bargain and Mission 66 objectives, administrators planned to replace the existing campground with a new one of 250 camp and picnic sites, 150 of these to be developed by 1966. They wanted to build a visitor center with administrative offices, a new protection building and jail, housing for seven permanent and twenty seasonal employees, and a children's playground at Bright Angel Point. They also intended to rehabilitate all utilities, to build a new entrance station and adjacent ranger housing, and to add a facility similar to Yavapai Observation Station at Cape Royal. Administrators expected the Utah Parks Company to participate in Mission 66 by building more cabins, increasing overnight capacity on the North Rim from 700 in 1956 to 1,500 by 1966. They also expected the concessioner to build or renovate restaurants, a cafeteria, lunch counters, or soda fountains to increase meal capacity to 5,000 per day, and to operate a planned 100-pad NPS trailer camp.³⁴

In the middle years of its twenty-year contract, the Utah Parks Company was reluctant to invest in such facilities, given that occupancy of recently renovated cabins had averaged only 70 percent since 1950, that demand exceeded supply only a few days of each season, and that they had yet to achieve profitability. The company also expressed concern that construction of a new highway to Page and Kanab in association with Glen Canyon Dam would bypass the Kaibab Plateau and detract from business. They generally doubted NPS visitation forecasts.³⁵ As it turned out, the concessioner continued to maintain and renovate existing facilities during Mission 66 but built nothing new. The National Park Service, too, did little at the North Rim, focusing instead on South Rim developments.³⁶

In 1965, with nearly 130,000 visitors arriving annually at Bright Angel Point, administrators again conjured radical changes. These included conversion of the Grand Canyon Lodge into an NPS visitor center with administrative offices, elimination of all lodge cabins, construction of two-story motel units for 400 guests at the Grand Canyon Inn and campground area, and development of a new accommodation zone at Marble Flats (Harvey Meadow) that would contain a 500-site campground, 500-seat amphitheater, and trailer village. In the following year, with the concessioner's contract nearing its end, the park abandoned these plans and sought a new agreement that would require a \$3.5 million investment for new and rehabilitated facilities at Bright Angel Point to accommodate 1,500 overnight guests.³⁷

By 1968 administrators had cut back on this ambitious program, to \$2.6 million, but the exact price did not matter, since the Utah Parks Company refused to invest in new facilities. The Union Pacific Railroad by the 1960s had grown impatient with consistent losses and, like the Santa Fe Railroad, tired of its role in the national parks. Service as well as facilities had deteriorated due to lack of investment in labor, training, and supervision, eliciting a growing number of visitor complaints. By the time a fact sheet had been developed for a new contract in 1968, the railroad was well into negotiations with a financial holding company, General Host Corporation, to purchase the Utah Parks Company.³⁸ The NPS welcomed the sale if it would effect the hefty improvement program it desired within the first five years, and General Host agreed to the investment if allowed to increase rates and make other changes to pay for them. The three parties involved—the Utah Parks Company, General Host Corporation, and the NPS—agreed to a fifteen-year contract, dependent on consummation of the Union Pacific Railroad sale. That sale fell through in early 1969, however, requiring administrators to extend the Utah Parks Company's contract on a year-to-year-basis and to start anew determining North Rim needs.³⁹

In 1969 complaints from expanding tourism interests in southern Utah concerning concession monopolies caused the National Park Service to consider removal of all commercial facilities from Zion, Bryce, and Grand Canyon's North Rim, and to reconsider the concessioner's exclusive transportation right.⁴⁰ Such a dramatic move was thought unlikely at the North Rim, since accommodations remained sparse between Kanab, Fredonia, and Bright Angel Point, and potable water was much more abundant at the latter location than anywhere else on the Arizona Strip. The possibility ended thoughts of expansion, however, and, with the donation of all Utah Parks Company's facilities to the government in 1972, certainly influenced the new concession prospectus that solicited a far leaner renovation program.⁴¹ Six bids were submitted in 1972 based on scaled-down investments and the Union Pacific Railroad's certain departure. The NPS awarded the contract to TWA Services, Inc., a subsidiary of Trans World Airlines, Inc., based primarily on the hotel-restaurant experience of another subsidiary, Hilton International. The ten-year contract executed in March 1973 called for a renovation program of only \$130,000 and payment of a \$2,000 annual grounds fee plus 2 percent of gross receipts not to exceed 50 percent of net profits. It also terminated the concession's preferential right to transportation services and allowed for the gradual elimination of overnight facilities at NPS discretion.⁴²

On the South Rim, final disposition of the Kolb concession reflected both administrators' intent to clear the rim of nonessential businesses and structures and the nation's growing interest in protecting its historic resources. Emery Kolb, aware of the park service's position, still hoped to retain his rimside studio or pass it along to his family upon his death. Emery Kolb's wife, Blanche, and brother, Ellsworth, died in 1960. Knowing that the park would not allow him to sell the concession or pass it on to his descendants, Emery sold his studio, adjacent garage, and village residence to the National Park Service in 1962 for \$65,000.⁴³ He retained a life interest in the properties and continued to operate his concession with short-term contract extensions for the next fourteen years, earning more in the late 1960s and 1970s than he ever had by delivering lectures and selling film, photographs, and native handicrafts until his death in December 1976. Kolb Studio owes its survival to Emery's tenacity and longevity. Administrators intended to remove the structure from the rim upon his death, but the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and subsequent inclusion of the property within the Grand Canyon Village Historic District thwarted their plans. The building remained little used until the early 1990s when Grand Canyon Association undertook restoration efforts at a cost of more than \$1 million by 1999.⁴⁴

The Verkamps' business and studio also survived due to the persistence of the family and the Historic Preservation Act. Through the mid-1960s, administrators periodically prodded the family to raze the building and relocate the concession to the Mather Business Zone. By the time a new ten-year contract was executed in January 1969, they had acknowledged the structure's historic value and no longer called for its demolition. Instead, the new agreement required the family to invest \$35,000 in a lounge and restrooms, modern fixtures and furnishings, and a new warehouse, all of which they completed by the following year. Required to pay a franchise fee of 4-1/2 percent of gross sales, the Verkamps nevertheless continued to prosper, with receipts climbing from \$190,000 in 1961 to \$800,000 by 1976. The concession's business structure changed from a partnership to a corporation in 1970, but the principals remained the wife and children of pioneer operator John Verkamp.⁴⁵

The National Park Service had more success relocating the Babbitt concession. In 1966 the company built a new store at Desert View. In the same year, they applied for a new contract, in preparation for investments in another store to be built within the new business zone along with additional employee apartments, a warehouse, and upgraded equipment and inventories. As in the past, the Babbitts offered a hard bargain, insisting on a thirty-year contract, reduced franchise fees, and compensation for their 1926 building, which administrators wanted removed. NPS negotiators countered with an offer of a twenty-year contract, fees in the amount of 2.5 percent of gross sales, and, consistent with policy, no compensation for the old building, since it would be replaced by the existing concessioner on the basis of a new contract. They also expected the company to raze the building and restore the site at its own expense. The Babbitts again enlisted the aid of their aging friend, Senator Carl Hayden, and the contract signed more than two years later reflected compromise. The twenty-year agreement, effective 1 January 1968 through 31 December 1987, called for an investment of \$715,000 and payment of 2 percent of gross sales, excluding native handicrafts. After relocating to its new store in the business zone in 1969, the company donated the old building to the park in return for contract concessions and to avoid salvage costs and site restoration. The park then loaned it to the Fred Harvey Company, who remodeled the interior and used it as an employee recreation center and home of the community library, until an electrical fire in 1994 accomplished what administrators could not.⁴⁶

Attention to the South Rim's three minor concessioners was understandably eclipsed by the desire to provide meals, shelter, and transportation to a burgeoning number of visitors. In 1957 Superintendent McLaughlin outlined facility

requirements for Fred Harvey president Leslie Scott to keep in step with the NPS program already in progress. He requested rooms, cabins, and dining facilities that could serve 2,500 overnight guests and 7,500 meals daily at the village and new business zone, 400 guests and 1,500 meals at Desert View, and 100 guests and 300 meals at Phantom Ranch. He expected that these additions, along with the National Park Service's new campground and trailer park at the business center and 100-, 25-, and 20-site campgrounds at Desert View, Phantom Ranch, and Indian Garden, respectively, would meet the demands of 1966. The Fred Harvey Company's inexperience at developing facilities, along with limited cash, a \$2 million debt to the railroad, the need to renovate existing facilities, and doubts over NPS tourist projections, prevented the company from meeting McLaughlin's suggestions by the target year. They did undertake an aggressive building and renovation program, however, completing the ninety-six-room (384 pillows) Yavapai Lodge in 1958 and its sixty-four-room (256 pillows) second phase in 1962, the \$150,000 camper services building in 1961, the Desert View service station in 1963, and an addition to the Bright Angel Lodge dining room in 1964. The company also remodeled rooms, cabins, and dining facilities at the El Tovar, Bright Angel Lodge, and Motor Lodge on an annual basis, and built residences and dormitories for its employees, who numbered 660 in the summer of 1966. With commitments to invest only \$1 million during the life of its 1954 contract, the Fred Harvey Company actually spent more than \$2.7 million in capital improvements during 1954-66 alone.⁴⁷

Despite significant concessioner and NPS investments made by 1966, lodging and dining services fell short of Mission 66 plans. For its part, the National Park Service

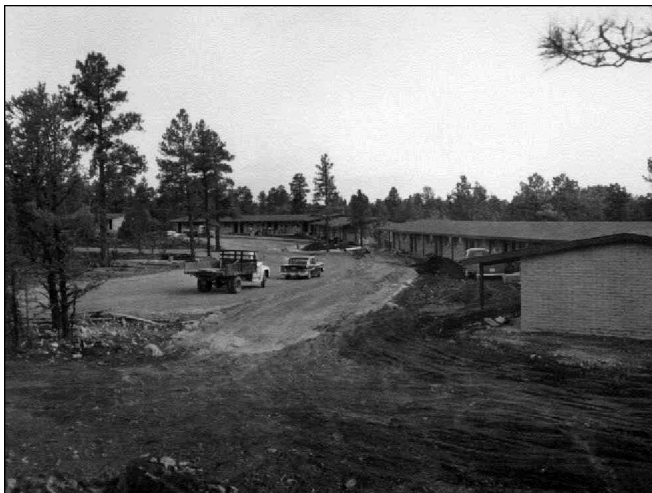


Figure 39. The first units of Yavapai Lodge under construction, April 1958. GRCA 3355.

did add nearly 200 overnight units with the trailer village and eased pressure at the Motor Lodge by relocating camp-sites to the 238-site Mather Campground.⁴⁸ The Fred Harvey Company did not measure up to expectations, however, failing to add anything at Desert View and Phantom Ranch while achieving only 305 rooms at the El Tovar and Yavapai Lodge and a few more than 200 cabins at the Motor Lodge and Bright Angel, for a total pillow count of 1,650.⁴⁹ Dining facilities lagged as well, with the addition at Bright Angel Lodge raising the number of village dining seats to only 825. At the same time, visitation doubled, from 890,000 in 1955 to 1,800,000 in 1966, and efforts to better distribute the seasonal load failed. Facilities remained more than adequate during most of the year, but since demand continued to exceed capacity during the summer months, complaints of those who were turned away or waited in line for meals never diminished.⁵⁰

Under this kind of visitation pressure, administrators abandoned hopes of removing commercial facilities from the rim. They retreated instead to a policy of limited construction within the old accommodation zone (bracketed by Kolb Studio and Verkamps Curios), adding new hotels and dining facilities to replace old Fred Harvey Company dormitories and a few nonessential structures. This policy shift was also influenced by Fred Harvey president Leslie Scott, who persuaded NPS managers that more people in the future would arrive by bus from the gateway towns and new Grand Canyon Airport. Without automobiles, taxis, or shuttle service, these visitors, like those who had long ago come by train, would prefer rim accommodations rather than a long walk from the Yavapai Lodge to the canyon's edge. Scott also argued that additions to the Yavapai and Motor Lodges would still be necessary for motorists, but there could be no construction until completion of the new water system.⁵¹

Recognizing escalating peak demands as well as administrators' desire to satisfy them, the Fred Harvey Company offered in 1967 to undertake a \$1.6-million-dollar program to further modernize and expand facilities in return for a new contract. The company had lost its reluctance to build since the 1954 agreement, earning annual net profits of 6.3 to 9.5 percent, and 30 to 38 percent returns on investment, on gross receipts of \$4.1 to \$5.2 million by 1961-64. During the same four years, they paid only \$36,000 to \$43,300 per year in franchise fees, computed at .75 percent of gross, and had nearly retired their debt to the Santa Fe Railroad. The company had done so well, in fact, that the NPS renegotiated the franchise fee to 1.5 percent of gross in 1965.⁵² Administrators jumped at Scott's offer, but insisted on a still greater financial commitment. Thereafter, NPS and Fred Harvey Company officials hammered out a \$3 million, five-year program to include a new Yavapai Lodge

services building and a third phase of additional rooms within the Mather Business Zone; replacement of cabins at the Bright Angel and Motor Lodges with multiple units; a new hotel west of the El Tovar; and a 100-unit campground at Grandview, to be followed by another \$2 million, five-year program. The contract, executed in March 1969 for the period 1 January 1969 through 31 December 1998, required two five-year building programs and payment of 2 percent of gross receipts, excluding native handicrafts. Other terms retained from prior contracts included the company's possessory interest in its assets, a monopoly on transportation services with the NPS reserving the right to reconsider, preferential right to provide its services and to subsequent contract renewals, and the subordination of franchise fees to "objectives of protecting and preserving the area and providing adequate and appropriate services for visitors at reasonable rates."⁵³

The Fred Harvey Company's ability to expand contractual programs to meet NPS developmental requirements was facilitated by its July 1968 merger with AmFac, Inc., a Hawaii-based company that was formed in the mid-nineteenth century to grow sugar cane but had since diversified into wholesale merchandising, department stores, general finance, real estate, and resort properties.⁵⁴ Award of the contract touched off a controversy involving another corporate conglomerate, Host International, who had managed to put together a bid during the thirty-day public-notice period. They proposed a \$15 million construction program that would include a twenty-million gallon underground water-storage facility with pipelines (to be donated to the government), a new 300-room hotel, restaurants, trailer parks, campgrounds, retail stores, and service stations. The conflict underscored the intimate collaboration between the National Park Service and its principal concessioner. Host International claimed that the relationship was too close for true competitive bidding, given frequent NPS-Fred Harvey Company meetings to settle on requirements before going to bid, the brief period of public notice, and preferential rights. In the end, the park managed to deflect criticisms and affirm the new contract, but the experience, reflecting a new era of corporate competition for lucrative national park tourist markets, would contribute in following decades to more democratic methods of assessing developmental needs and awarding concession contracts.⁵⁵

Since neither the National Park Service nor the Fred Harvey Company had expected competitive bids, they continued building and renovation projects while contract negotiations ran their course. They agreed to focus on visitor services at the Motor Lodge, along the rim, and within the Mather Business Zone while postponing plans for Desert View, Grandview, Phantom Ranch, and sites west of

Rowe Well. They disagreed over architectural design, exact building sites, and construction priorities, and the concessioner often found itself in a "hurry-up-and-wait" position as administrators struggled with master plan revisions and funding for each new building's utility requirements. By 1968 the concessioner had overcome most obstacles, and they began their most aggressive building program in park history. At the Motor Lodge, which would be renamed Maswik Lodge in the early 1980s, the concessioner replaced nearly 100 cabins dating to the late 1920s with two-story, multi-unit accommodations. After pondering the demolition of Colter Hall for several years, the concessioner opted instead to relocate the Fred Harvey dormitory known as the Brown Building and tear down the Colter Hall annex, making room for the Thunderbird and Kachina Lodges, built in 1968 and 1971 respectively. Park service contractors finally finished laying utilities and a parking lot at the business zone in 1969, paving the way for the Yavapai Lodge central services building and a third phase of motel units, both completed in 1972, as well as the Babbitt Store, post office, and bank. In all, the concessioner spent nearly \$10 million in new and remodeled visitor facilities, employee dormitories, and other support structures during 1967-76, belatedly exceeding Mission 66 goals with 665 rooms sleeping 2,500, 114 cabins housing another 346, and more than 900 dining room and cafeteria seats.⁵⁶ All the while, visitation increased to 2.7 million by 1975, dashing administrators' hopes that the new facilities would meet demands.

Congestion in summer months concerned NPS managers, who had another type of experience in mind for the traveling public, but pleased concessioners who depended on capacity demand to offset winter doldrums. General inflation and a desire to increase profits had caused prices to jump since the early 1950s, despite administrators' persistent arguments with Fred Harvey Company (and later AmFac) managers to accommodate lower- to upper-middle class clientele. By 1977 older cabins at the low-end Motor Lodge had increased to \$13 to 15 per night, with new "highrise" multi-unit rooms priced at \$24, despite economies in their construction. Rooms and cabins at the mid-range Bright Angel and Yavapai Lodges rented for \$19-30, while prices at the high-end Thunderbird, Kachina, and El Tovar ranged from \$30 for a single to \$65 for suites. Visitors could still enjoy most of the scenic trips offered since the 1920s, but fares had climbed to \$24 for a mule ride to Plateau Point, \$90 for a two-day trip to Phantom Ranch, and \$5-15 for a bus ride to Hermits Rest, Desert View, or Cameron. Added facilities, higher prices, and management efficiencies nearly tripled AmFac revenues from \$6 million in 1966 to \$15.8 million in 1976, with after-tax profits rising consistently during the same period from \$540,000 to \$1.5 million. Franchise fees at 2 percent of gross also rose substantially, from \$90,000 to \$277,000.⁵⁷

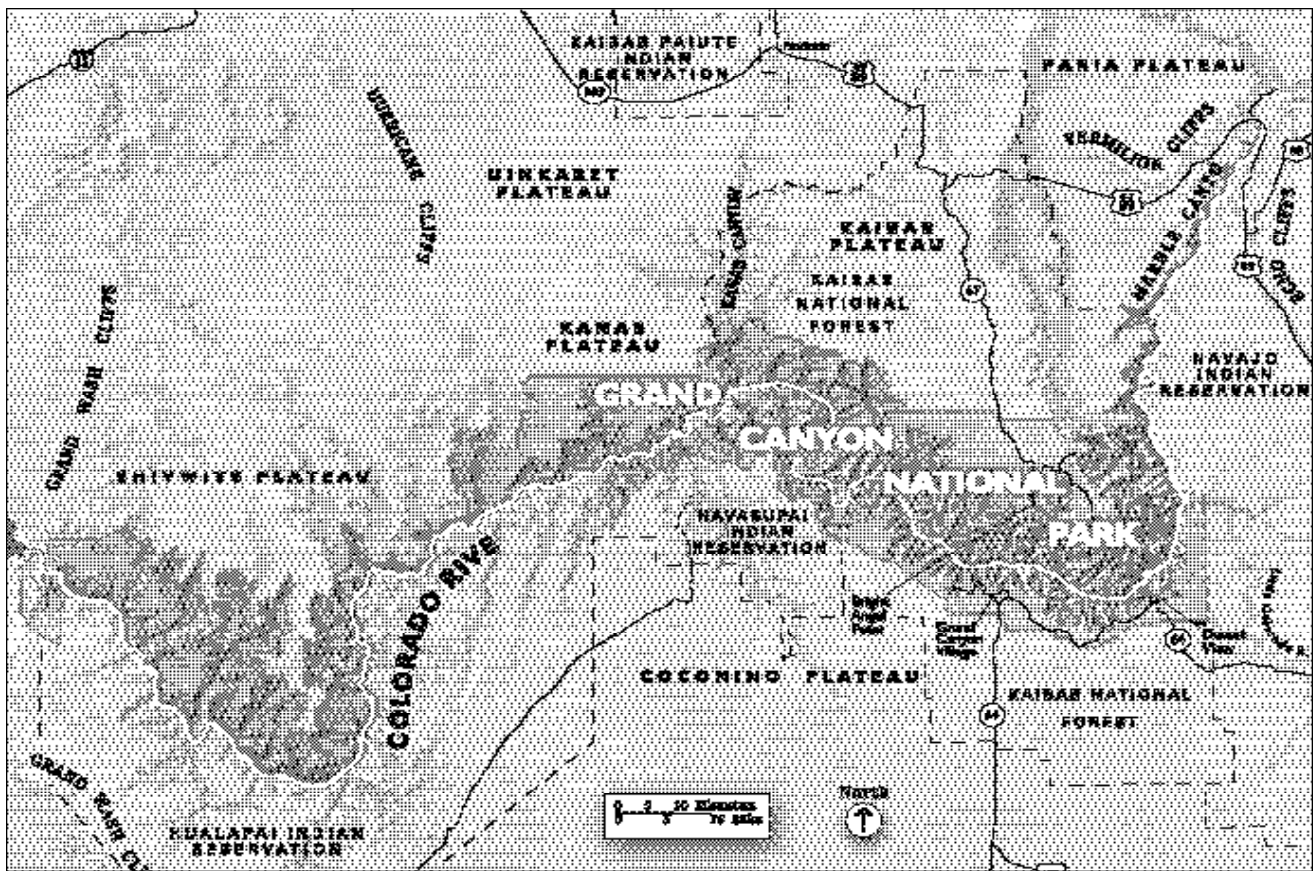


Figure 40. Map of park boundaries, post-1975. Since 1975 Grand Canyon National Park boundaries have provided a modicum of protection to the entire length (277 miles) of Grand and Marble Canyons. However, they do not ensure against the adverse effects of regional development, in-park developments, burgeoning visitation, varied forms of pollution, noise, neighboring land manager's practices, and potential development by bordering tribes and private land owners.

This map shows the neighboring tribes and agencies, the area set aside for special (traditional) use and in-park areas designated for NPS development. It cannot adequately convey today's problems with private tourism developments, water shortages, aircraft overflights, air pollution, automotive congestion, escalating backcountry use and a river that no longer flows freely.

NPS/ENVIRONMENTALIST RIFT

While local administrators focused on crowds and consumer demand at Grand Canyon Village and wavered over decentralization and North Rim expansion, the National Park Service officially remained silent concerning protection of the canyon as a whole, a circumstance that, combined with the building mania of Mission 66, opened a still-unhealed rift between the agency and long-time environmental supporters. When proposals to dam the river got back on track in the mid-1960s, park officials proved as impotent in shaping the outcome as they had in the 1950s. Superintendent McLaughlin picked up where Harold Bryant and Lon Garrison had left off in condemning a high dam at Bridge Canyon that would flood the river through Grand Canyon National Monument and a portion of the park itself. NPS director Conrad Wirth again spoke out against any action that would affect the river within park bounds, and lost his job for the effort. But nothing had really changed from the prior decade. Interior Secretary Stewart Udall, like his predecessor Oscar Chapman, sided with the Bureau of Reclamation and developers when he ordered NPS personnel to remain quiet or toe the official line.⁵⁸

Udall's position and NPS quiescence in effect surrendered responsibility for protecting the park (and Grand Canyon as a whole) to a coalition of preservationist organizations responsible for the modern environmental movement. The Sierra Club and its executive director, David Brower, smarting from the compromise that resulted in Glen Canyon Dam, led this coalition against one of the grander water-augmentation schemes ever conjured in the West, one that again included hydroelectric dams at Bridge and Marble Canyons. The controversy reached its climax during 1963-68, pitting a mounting number of outdoor organizations, newspapers, magazines, politicians, and inflamed citizens against a predictable array of state governments, western developers, their congressional allies, and the Bureau of Reclamation. The Colorado River Basin Project Bill that emerged in 1968 again reflected compromise, with preservationists achieving their principal goal of preventing dams within Grand Canyon, but at the price of coal-fired generating stations that would power regional towns and cities as well as Arizona's metropolitan water lifeline, the Central Arizona Project. Those who had entered the fray to save the river viewed the outcome as a

positive step forward, however, and gained confidence to effect passage of important environmental legislation in ensuing decades.⁵⁹

The momentum gained in the struggle to defeat the dams led to efforts to protect the canyon in its entirety. Independent of a marginalized, still-silent National Park Service, the Sierra Club in 1963 passed a resolution to include Marble Canyon and the lower Grand Canyon within the park and drafted legislation to that effect that was introduced by House Representative John Saylor in 1966. The bill failed, but it may have inspired Stewart Udall to propose a 70,000-acre addition in the following year that would include Marble Canyon and Kanab Creek. Udall's proposition also failed, but he persuaded President Lyndon Johnson to create Marble Canyon National Monument by proclamation in January 1969. Monument status removed Marble Canyon's potential dam sites from Federal Power Commission authority and effectively blocked lingering water project schemes of individual states. In the following five years environmental groups joined the National Park Service, adjacent land management agencies, and Indian tribes to determine exact boundaries for a park that would enclose the entire canyon. Their efforts were rewarded by the Grand Canyon National Park Enlargement Act (Public Law 93-620) of 4 January 1975 that absorbed Grand Canyon and Marble Canyon National Monuments and, with additional adjacent lands, nearly doubled the park's size to more than 1.2 million acres.⁶⁰

The enlargement act created today's park, which extends from the Paria River at Lees Ferry to the Grand Wash Cliffs near river mile 277, including important tributaries and new additions to the North Rim. As a compromise it returned 83,800 acres of park land to the Havasupai Tribe in the Manakacha, Topocoba, and Tenderfoot Plateau areas and ensured their traditional use of another 95,300 acres. Expansion also introduced or changed the nature of debates between administrators and the Havasupai, Hualapai, and Navajo Tribes. Since 1975 the NPS has been concerned over scenic easements along the rims and that tribal develop-

ment not conflict with backcountry objectives. The tribes have developed an interest in canyon-related tourism facilities, and they now argue reservation boundaries in terms of traditional land use that overlaps politically drawn park boundaries.⁶¹

On a broader plane, the National Park Service's enforced neutrality in the twenty-year struggle to prevent dams and their late entry into efforts to protect the entire canyon helped bifurcate the course of park management. On the national path, unfettered and empowered environmental groups assumed the task of fighting for preservation against developmental interests (including the National Park Service, when so perceived), using litigation, political lobbying, and public opinion to achieve their ends. On the regional path, administrators persisted as they always had with immediate demands of recreational tourism, trying to limit developments and other intrusions to some extent but remaining only one federal bureau among many interests engaged in public land management as well as western development.

■ ■ ■

Following the traditional path during 1956-75, canyon administrators and their concession partners worked in tandem to respond to democratic demands for more and better roads, trails, hotels, cabins, restaurants, campgrounds, and interpretive facilities. Along the way, they abandoned rustic architecture for the Mission 66 Style, adding to the inconsonance between the natural environment and human constructions that NPS founders had worked hard to avoid. They also wrote and rewrote master plans to suit demand rather than an aesthetic or ecological ideal and once again considered extreme decentralization of customer services before settling on modest expansion, due primarily to economic restraints. More administrative and concession structures would be built in ensuing years to accommodate greater numbers of visitors, but the 1960s and 1970s probably marked the last time that an in-park construction program like Mission 66 would be undertaken.

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