



Insider's Look at Grand Canyon

Webisode #54 – Getting on the river. / Who lived here before? Transcript

Ranger Patrick Gamman: Welcome to this week's webisode of Insider's Look at Grand Canyon. Hi, I'm Ranger Patrick, one of the hosts of the show. And to get to where I am right now I got on a boat, about 30-35 miles upriver from where I am now. I got on at a place called;"Lee's Ferry". I have been going down the river and I am seeing all sorts of amazing things. You know 28,000 to 30,000 people a go down the Colorado River by boat each year. So, I started at Lee's Ferry and I am thinking about all the people who come down here now... but where I am standing right now, I am finding some archeological sites. I am actually finding, and this is rare to find along the river's edge, I am finding some rock art. And the thing about rock art is, anywhere in the southwest you find lots of this stuff and you find it at Grand Canyon but not close to the river usually. Between the rock art and these rock walls that I am finding as I walk over here, well there is an important lesson here. And that is we use this canyon today, there is so many people coming down it in modern times, but it is not just us. Many peoples have been here throughout time. Where ever you find water you will find people. They will try to make their living in whatever environment they are in. So, if you ever get the change to come to the Grand Canyon, whether you are down at the river or up at the rim, take a look out at the canyon and think; "Is that a place where people would live?" They would use different parts of the canyon during different times of the year. In the winter time some of the peoples before us would actually go up the rim and they would hunt there. They would come down during the monsoon, which is July/ August/ September, that is the time I am going right now. They would come down and actually farm, they would try to use the water resource here to grow crops. A tough, tough life, but people did thrive here.

Part II

Ranger Patrick Gamman: I am several miles further down river then where I showed you the rock art at the archeological site. We are at another archeological site and this one is known as Nankoweep. It was a big area where people thrived over a thousand years ago. The people farmed here and they stored their food here way above the river in the granaries right behind me. The big problem that modern hikers have today that was a problem for the ancient people as well was keeping your food safe from things like rodents. So, they would actually build structures to put their pots in that would have things like corn, beans, and squash. But let's think about where they actually farmed. If you take a look (see video) here is the river. During the monsoon season is when you would probably farm. But as you look across here is a huge delta. Today it looks very desert like. You might wonder how did these ancient people... were they able to farm here? Well, one thing you should know there was more rain here one thousand years ago. But, over the centuries it has gotten dryer and dryer. That is why these people have moved to other areas. The descendants of what we call, "ancestral puebloans" you might know as Hopi, or Zuni, or some other folks that are related to them. When it comes to Grand Canyon you always think about people in the modern times coming and enjoying this place either up at the rim or down here at the river, on a river trip like I am right now. But never forget wherever you find water at Grand Canyon at one time or another there have been people. Thanks folks, we'll catch you next time on Insider's Look at Grand Canyon.



