



**Bureau of Land Management**

**National Park Service**

**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument  
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[www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/blm\\_special\\_areas/natmon/gcp.html](http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/blm_special_areas/natmon/gcp.html)



## News Release

# Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument

Contact: Scott Sticha 435-688-3377

Date: March 21, 2014

### **Parashant National Monument Receives International Dark Sky Status**

Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument has been recognized by the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) as the Parashant International Night Sky Province-Window to the Cosmos. The million-plus acre Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument located in northwestern Arizona remains one of the most remote areas in the contiguous United States and earned the International Dark Sky Park Gold-tier status, the highest level of award representing the darkest skies.

The Monument and surrounding geographic region are recognized for remarkable combinations of high elevation plateaus, excellent air quality, sparse population and prevalent cloud-free weather which produce some of the best opportunities to visually observe and enjoy dark night skies. Starry night skies and natural darkness are important resources and recognized monument objects of Parashant.

Parashant National Monument is a Service First organization jointly managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and National Park Service (NPS). The IDA Dark Sky designation is a first for a BLM area and the fifth NPS site to be designated, joining Natural Bridges National Monument, Big Bend National Park, Death Valley National Park and Chaco Culture National Historical Park.

The designation provides local communities with an increased economic opportunity for attracting more eco-tourists, researchers, and the scientific community who seek to study astronomy under the Monument's pristine dark sky conditions. It also will lead to more educational programs for local youth and provide information for those who want to protect night sky resources.

Dark night skies are a rapidly disappearing resource around the world as inefficient and ineffective light sources increase. Voluntary and simple efforts can be made to reduce light pollution and prevent further degradation of this resource. NPS Director Jon Jarvis stated, "What's really great about night sky is that it is something you can restore. It's not gone. It's still there and all we have to do is pay attention to our lighting. Create efficiency in lighting and you get a dark sky." To learn more about simple ways you can help to keep night skies dark please visit <http://www.nature.nps.gov/night/>.

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**Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument** contains over a million acres of vast, remote and sparsely developed lands that are co-managed under a Service First Agreement by the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service to conserve in perpetuity the cultural and natural features and values.

A public event and daytime astronomy festival is scheduled to officially receive the designation and celebrate National Park Week, International Dark Sky Awareness Week and Junior Ranger Day in St. George, UT on April 26, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Dixie State University. A full line up of activities is being planned, including a reading and signing of a Southern Paiute Sky Story “Why the Moon Paints Her Face Black” by Eleanor Tom and Chloe Valentine Brent and the unveiling of a specially designed art poster created by Dr. Tyler Nordgren. A variety of information booths, along with astronomy related educational programs for children and a chance to earn a Junior Ranger Night Explorer badge will also be part of the festival. For more information please call 435-688-3377.

**-NPS & BLM -**

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