



The national parks are often called “America’s best idea,” but it must be remembered that the America into which the first parks were born was a country that was bent on destroying its original peoples. To its credit, the National Park Service now acknowledges our national history of dispossessing indigenous people and their communities in its brochures, displays, and other interpretive materials. Here, Dianna Sue Uqualla and James Uqualla of the Havasupai Tribe perform a traditional blessing at a ceremony dedicating new facilities, Grand Canyon National Park (Arizona).



For many indigenous people, there is an inseparable link between nature and culture. Canyon de Chelly National Monument (Arizona) is co-managed with the Navajo Nation.



The National Park Service is in a position to help non-Native people realize that their understanding of America can never be complete until Native viewpoints are included. Ceremony at Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site (Hawai'i); Mamalahoa Trail, part of Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail (Hawai'i).



At Grand Portage National Monument (Minnesota), which is run in cooperation with the Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe, murals depicting traditional activities were commissioned for the visitor center, and you can watch the park's orientation film in Ojibwemowin, the Ojibwe language.



At Pipestone National Monument (Minnesota), Native Americans quarry and carve catlinite (red pipestone) as a central part of the park's mission.



In National Park of American Samoa, The National Park Service does not own any of the terrestrial or marine resources that make up the three units of the national park. Instead, lands are leased from villages on three islands and are cooperatively managed.



Petroglyphs under the night sky at Grand Canyon–Parashant National Monument (Arizona). Here, the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians is leading the way in protecting the park’s pristine night skies from pollution by artificial lighting. For the Paiutes, the night sky is the “canvas” for countless traditional stories and keeping this nightscape pristine will help maintain a precious cultural heritage.



At Bering Land Bridge National Preserve (Alaska), the legislation establishing the park provides for indigenous people and others to hunt, trap, and continue traditional subsistence use of resources within park boundaries, ensuring connections between people and the landscape in perpetuity.