

Pipe Spring

Pipe Spring National Monument
Arizona

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Life Source in a Dry Land

The Peopling of the Arizona Strip

George H. H. Huey

Water is a powerful force in human affairs. For millennia Pipe Spring has drawn a succession of peoples—either as an oasis on their journeys or as a water source for permanent settlements. The spring is on the Arizona Strip, a vast, isolated landscape that lies between the Grand Canyon and the Vermilion Cliffs of Northern Arizona. It is an arid and seemingly uninhabitable region, but hidden geological forces have brought water to a few places here, opening them to human settlement. The Strip is the first in a series of terraces that step up to the high plateau of central Utah some 200 miles to the north. There, water from rain and snowmelt percolates down to a hard shale layer and flows southward to the base of the Vermilion Cliffs, where it is forced to the surface at places such as Pipe Spring.

For 12,000 years the Strip was a travel corridor for nomadic big game hunters, hunter-gatherers, and traders, the first people to be sustained by these springs. Ancestral Puebloan peoples (also known as Anasazi) were the next to settle in the area, followed by related Southern Paiute tribes who live here still. Beginning in the 1700s, missionaries and explorers visited the area to chart the land. In the mid-1800s the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) came upon the Arizona Strip while seeking water and land to expand their new homeland in the west. Each of these cultures affected how the others adapted to this hard and demanding place in the high desert.



Cowboys ran cattle at several Mormon ranches on the Arizona Strip.



Ancestral Pueblos

Semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers traveled the Arizona Strip until around 300 B.C., when they were supplanted or assimilated by ancestral Puebloan peoples. The earliest of these people lived in pithouse villages, combined farming with gathering and hunting with bow and arrow, wove baskets, ground seeds with shaped stones, and traded salt, turquoise, and seashells. As their culture evolved, they turned increasingly to farming, began making pottery, created more sophisticated stone tools, and built above-ground pueblos. Between 1000 and 1250 the ancestral Puebloan culture gradually faded from the Arizona Strip. There was a prolonged drought during this period, and perhaps the land could no longer support such a concentrated population. They may have simply moved away or been absorbed by various Southern Paiute bands.

Photographs not otherwise credited are from the archives of the National Park Service.



A Kaibab Paiute woman displays basketwork, a trademark of her culture.

Archeological evidence of pithouses and pueblos have been found in many places on the Arizona Strip.



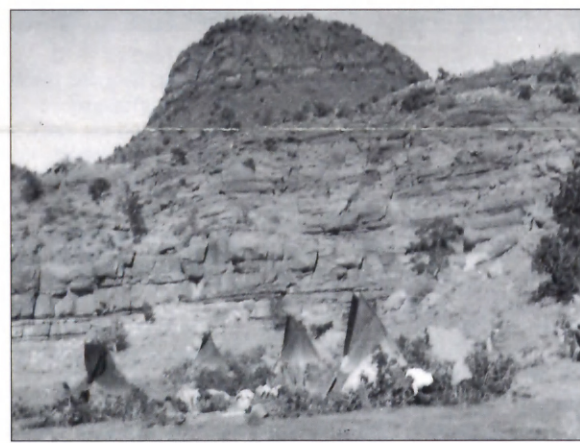
Pithouse

Paiutes

The Kaibab Paiutes were superbly adapted to their harsh environment. Moving in small, semi-nomadic groups, using natural shelters or building wickiups of juniper branches and brush, they were better able to glean the region's resources than the sedentary Pueblos. They cultivated maize and beans at places like Pipe Spring, but also moved seasonally to hunt deer, pronghorn, rabbits, and lizards and gather grass seed, piñon nuts, roots, and prickly pears. From hemp dogbane fiber they wove nets to trap rabbits, whose pelts were used to make robes. Basketry, their finest material achievement, met a variety of needs: seed fans for beating seeds from bushes, conical harvesting baskets, winnowing baskets, seed griel bowls, meat baskets, pitch-coated water jugs, and women's hats. This efficient way of life sustained them well until the arrival of Europeans in the late 1700s, after which introduced diseases and Navajo and Ute slaving raids reduced their numbers from 5,500 to 200 by the 1870s.



James M. Whitmore, the first landowner at Pipe Spring, brought livestock and built a dugout.



Dugout

Coffee grinder

Artifact photograph by Bill Timmerman



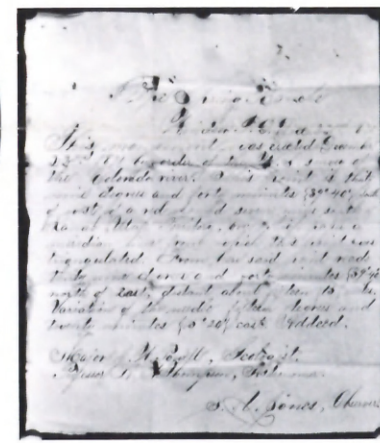
Seed-grinding stones

Missionaries and Explorers

The first Europeans to encounter the Southern Paiute tribes, Catholic missionaries Antanasio Dominguez and Silvestre Velez de Escalante, likely owed their lives to them. During the missionaries' unsuccessful 1776 expedition from Santa Fe to California, the Paiutes provided them with food and told them of a route across the Arizona Strip that skirted the Grand Canyon. Mormon missionary Jacob Hamblin undertook the first of his missions to the Hopi tribes in 1858, frequently stopping at Pipe Spring. Explorer John Wesley Powell first visited Pipe Spring in 1870 between his trips down the Colorado River. Powell and Hamblin traveled across the Arizona Strip contacting the Indian tribes to promote peace with the settlers. Powell's topographical survey crews stopped at Pipe Spring numerous times in 1872.



Explorer John Wesley Powell first visited Pipe Spring in 1870 before his second trip down the Colorado River.



Powell's surveying parties twice camped at Pipe Spring in the 1870s. In 1935 this survey document was found buried in an old can.

Southern Paiute tribes. By the early 20th century they were adopting Plains Indians ways, including tipis, horses, and buckskin shirts and leggings.

Dwelling drawings by Karen Barnes

Brush-and-branch wickiups were the traditional dwellings of

Wickiup



Pottery—Mormon and Indian



Ranch and Refuge



(Above) Anson and Emmeline Winsor ran Pipe Spring for the first six years. (Left) Edwin D. Woolley (on right) became manager in 1884. His second wife Flora (woman on left) spent six years here hiding on the polygamous underground.

The Mormon Outpost

The ranch at Pipe Spring was part of Brigham Young's vision for the growing Mormon population. Mormons often tithed (gave 10 percent) to the church in the form of cattle, and the growing tithing herds of southern Utah needed more space. Young also needed a source of beef and dairy products to feed hundreds of laborers working on the Mormon temple and other public projects in St. George, Utah. Noting the presence of water at Pipe Spring and the expanse of free grazing land on the Arizona Strip, Brigham Young decided to create a tithing ranch and business venture here. He purchased the land from James Whitmore's widow and appointed Anson Perry Winsor as the first ranch manager.

In September 1870 Young and Winsor stepped off the rough outlines of the ranch's main structure. Built to safeguard the ranch manager and his family, the fort had two sandstone buildings facing a courtyard enclosed by gates. The main spring was covered by the structure. Even before the fort was completed, a relay station for the Deseret Telegraph system was installed, connecting this remote

outpost on the Arizona Strip to other Mormon settlements and Salt Lake City, Utah.

From 1871 to 1876 the ranch was a beef and dairy operation. Every two weeks Winsor took butter, cheese, and cattle to St. George. The ranch prospered under a succession of managers, and the herd grew rapidly. In 1879 it was running more than 2,200 head of cattle. But dry seasons, along with the large herds at Pipe Spring and other ranches, began to damage the range. Pipe Spring suffered economically, although it continued to be an active ranch and resting place for travelers.

In the 1880s and 1890s the remote fort at Pipe Spring became a refuge for polygamous wives hiding from federal marshals enforcing anti-polygamy laws. Polygamy was the early Mormon doctrine of men having more than one wife. A number of women and their children hid at Pipe Spring to save their husbands and fathers from prosecution. Faced with the confiscation of church property and the declining range, the Mormon Church sold

Pipe Spring ranch in 1895. Although private, it continued as a central ranch for large herds of cattle on the Arizona Strip. Its doors remained open to travelers of every stripe: cowboys, traders, salesmen, and neighbors. Hired girl Maggie Cox Heaton recalled: "I welcomed lots of strangers and made pies and cakes and bread for 'em.... It was a busy place, a real busy place because of the cattle."

During this period the Kaibab band of Paiutes struggled to survive as Mormon settlements displaced them from their traditional hunting, farming, and gathering lands. In addition, overgrazing worsened by drought reduced the availability of native foods, leading to starvation. Increasing federal concern for their welfare prompted the formation of the Kaibab-Paiute Reservation in 1907, which included a small portion of their traditional lands. Pipe Spring, surrounded by the newly formed reservation, remained a private ranch. Conflicts over water rights and land use issues developed during this period and persisted for many years.

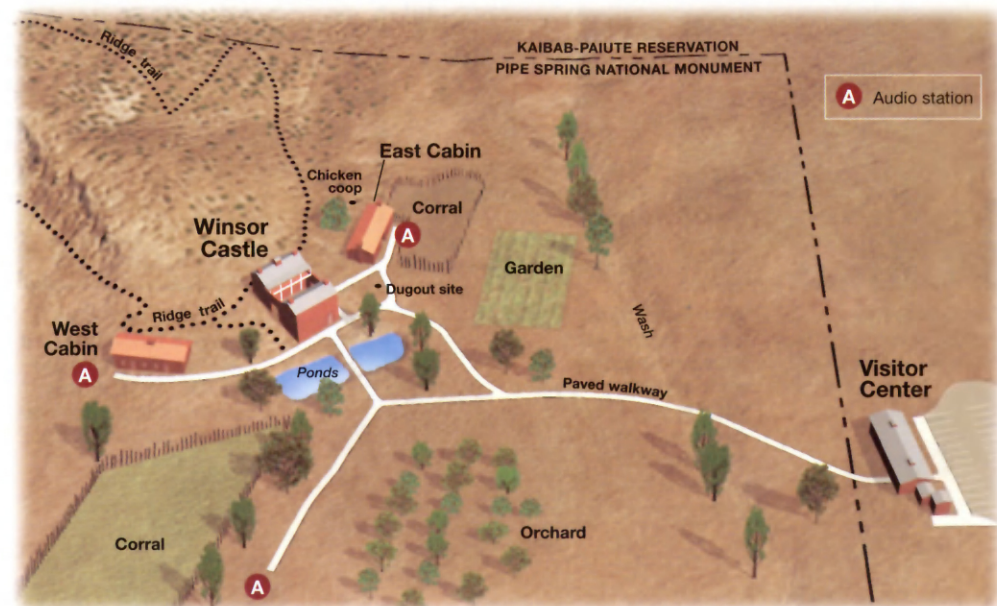
The National Monument

Steven Mather, the first director of the National Park Service, paved the way for Pipe Spring to become a national monument. Following the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, Mather actively sought public support for the agency and the parks that composed the National Park System. He worked closely with the railroads and their bus companies to bring Americans to the large western parks, including Zion and Grand Canyon. In the early 1920s, the Utah Parks Company, a transportation subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad, transported tourists from Zion to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon across the hot, dusty roads of the Arizona Strip. Mather realized the value of Pipe Spring as a cool oasis and potential lunch stop for the tourists making this rugged trip. Moreover, Mather was fascinated by the history of Pipe Spring and the old fort. He suggested its addition to the National Park System, and on May 31, 1923, President Warren G. Harding signed the proclamation setting aside Pipe Spring National Monument.

1885 sketch of Pipe Spring by Frenchman Albert Tissandier

Pipe Spring is situated at the foot of...the Vermilion Cliffs, and is famous throughout southern Utah as a watering place. Its flow is copious and its water is the purest and best throughout that desolate region.

— Clarence E. Dutton, *Tertiary History of the Grand Canyon District*, 1882



From 1881 to 1923 Mormon couples from Arizona stopped at Pipe Spring on their way to be married in the St. George temple.

This gave the road running by the fort the name Honey-moon Trail.



Eliza Louella Stewart was the first telegraph operator at Pipe Spring.



Telegraph line insulator

Telegraph key



Established as a national monument in 1923, Pipe Spring's first restoration project, the East Cabin, was completed in 1925.

Spur
Artifact photograph by Bill Timmerman



Pipe Spring still feeds holding ponds dug in the 1870s for watering livestock and irrigating the orchard and garden. (They are

still used for the latter tasks.) The surrounding trees make this a green oasis in the high desert.

Pipe Spring Today

Pipe Spring National Monument offers a glimpse of American Indian and pioneer life in the old west. Winsor Castle can be seen by guided tour every half hour. Visitors can see the rest of the monument at their leisure—the East Cabin (built by the Utah Militia), West Cabin (quarters for workers building the fort, later used by John Wesley Powell's surveying parties), corrals, garden, orchard, and ponds. The visitor center offers exhibits on pioneer and Indian life, the use of Pipe Spring by American Indians and Mormon settlers, and a short video providing an overview of the area's history. The ½-mile Ridge Trail has excellent views of the Arizona Strip, Mount Trumbull, the Kaibab Plateau, and Kanab Canyon. The park is closed Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1.

For Your Safety The park's livestock are not tame; keep a safe distance. There are rattlesnakes and other desert wildlife in the area. **Accessibility** The visitor center and gift shop are wheelchair-accessible. Paved walkways lead to all the historic structures, but the interiors are not wheelchair-accessible. **Directions** Pipe Spring, 14 miles southwest of Fredonia, Ariz., is reached from U.S. Alt-89 via Ariz. 389. From I-15, Utah 9 and 17 connect with Utah 59 at Hurricane, Utah, which leads to Ariz. 389. **For More Information** Write: Superintendent, Pipe Spring National Monument, HC65 Box 5, Fredonia, AZ 86022. Call: 520-643-7105. Internet: www.nps.gov/pisp. Visit the main National Park Service site at www.nps.gov.

At the Kaibab Paiute Tribal Heritage Day each October, tribes of Southern Paiute compete in various dances, songs, crafts, and games.



Photograph by Greg Aikenhead

The Kaibab-Paiute Reservation encompasses more than 120,000 acres of plateau and desert grassland surrounding the park. The tribe retains rights to one-third of the water flowing from the spring. Part of the Southern Paiute Nation, the Kaibab band has 240 members, whose traditional language is Southern Numic. Agriculture, tourism, and the tribal government sustain the economy. The tribe offers interpretive programs on its culture and leads tours of ancient rock art sites. It is an active partner with the park. Members work as seasonal rangers and help tell the Pipe Spring story from the Paiute point of view.

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