



# Foundation Document Overview

## Tuzigoot National Monument

Arizona



### Contact Information

For more information about the *Tuzigoot National Monument Foundation Document*, contact: [tuzi\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:tuzi_superintendent@nps.gov) or 928-634-5564 or write to:  
Tuzigoot National Monument, PO Box 219 Camp Verde, AZ 86322

## Purpose



*The purpose of TUZIGOOT NATIONAL MONUMENT is to preserve, study, and interpret outstanding archeological Sinagua resources including a large hilltop pueblo and related historic and prehistoric sites, associated cultural artifacts, and the ecologically sensitive Tavasci Marsh.*



## Significance

Significance statements express why Tuzigoot National Monument resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

1. Tuzigoot National Monument represents a continuum of land use from prehistoric Sinagua culture through the present and offers enormous learning potential about the relationship between humans and their environment.
2. The natural and cultural resources within Tuzigoot National Monument are significant to associated tribal people as evidenced by oral histories, the archeological record, and continuing practices and beliefs. To this day, 16 tribes maintain an association with the monument.
3. The excavation, restoration, and development at Tuzigoot National Monument illustrate the New Deal-era civilian work programs that pioneered archeological efforts in the Southwest. These efforts were instrumental in the preservation and accessibility of this and other national monuments.
4. The extent of the excavation of Tuzigoot National Monument's hilltop pueblo yielded one of the largest artifact assemblages, including trade ware, of the Sinagua culture in the Verde Valley.
5. Tavasci Marsh, the largest freshwater marsh in Arizona outside of the Colorado River system, supports a sensitive and diverse ecosystem. Since prehistoric times, the marsh provided inhabitants with plant and animal resources for edible, medicinal, and utilitarian purposes.



## Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Hilltop Pueblo and Related Archeological Resources**
- **Tavasci Marsh**
- **Cultural Continuity and Landscapes**
- **Scientific Values**

Tuzigoot National Monument contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Visitor Center/Museum**
- **Flora and Fauna**
- **Recreational Values**



## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- Land use patterns and human settlement of the Verde Valley illustrate the continuum of occupation in the Southwest and demonstrate how contemporary cultures are linked to, and identify with, this place.
- Riparian areas of the Verde Valley (and the Tavasci Marsh) support a diversity of plants and animals and serve an important role in scientific discovery and species survival as habitat is lost to development worldwide.
- Tuzigoot National Monument serves as a benchmark of pioneering archeological efforts in the Southwest and demonstrates evolving scientific inquiry, methods, and interpretations that help us understand past human experiences and how they inform the present.
- The experiences of people in the Verde Valley demonstrate how, through migration, travel, and trade along natural corridors, cultures influence and affect one another.
- The preservation and interpretation of Tuzigoot National Monument illustrate the NPS mission of protecting exemplary sites that contribute to our national identity while providing authentic places and experiences for people to connect to their heritage.
- The Verde River and its tributaries are the connection among the Verde Valley communities and have been critical to the sustenance of prehistoric, historic, and modern life in the valley.



## Description

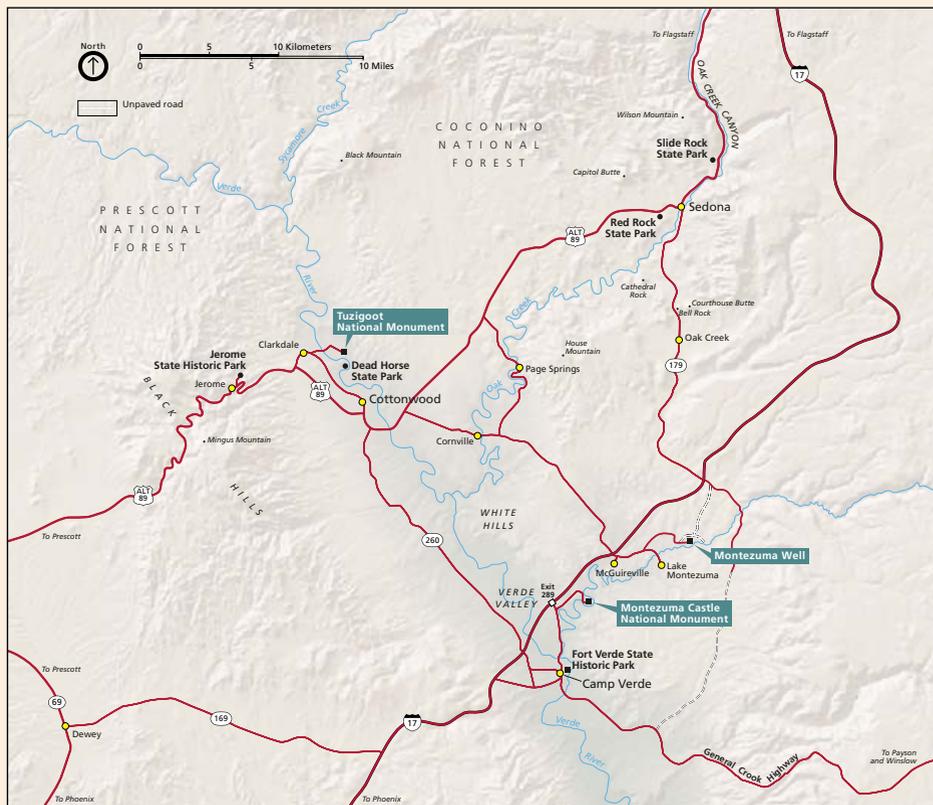
Positioned along the crest of an elevated desert hilltop overlooking the Verde River in Arizona are the remains of the large, multistoried Sinagua village of Tuzigoot. The village was well positioned to take full advantage of expansive views in all directions, a stable water supply provided by the Verde River, and the fertile soils of the Verde Valley. The pueblo is impressive in scale with up to 110 rooms including a second and third story. Tuzigoot (the Apache word for “crooked water”) was built in different phases from approximately CE (Common Era) 1125 to 1400. Archeological evidence shows the village started as a small cluster of rooms housing maybe 50 or so persons. The population continued to grow and so and the pueblo expanded. Later a long drought and other conditions brought many of the outlying farmers back to the village. The pueblo expanded again to accommodate the increasing population to the size seen today. The large pueblo had few doors or windows; access was by ladders through openings in the roof. The ceilings were low by modern standards with heights averaging 6 feet. This suited the Sinagua people as the average male was approximately 5 feet, 4 inches tall.

The Sinagua were primarily agriculturalists, however, they utilized most of the diverse species of plants found in the area. More than 25 species of native plants in the area provided medicine, dyes, baskets, building materials, food, and much more. They ground flour from seeds of buckwheat, rice grass, and amaranth. They used dried cactus fruit, beeweed flowers, and cattail root. Oils were made from sunflower seeds. Nuts were collected from pinon

and oak trees. Fruits such as hackberry, cactus, yucca, rose, and grape were gathered at different times throughout the year. Analysis of the Sinagua diet showed it was highly nutritious, rich in vitamins and minerals, and contained antiseptics, analgesics, and stimulants. As hunters they sought deer, antelope, rabbit, bear, muskrat, turtles, and duck. But it was their agricultural skills that helped to stabilize the food supply and allowed the culture to thrive for hundreds of years. Through reuse and expansion of canals built by previous occupants of the area, the Hohokam in CE 600, they successfully farmed corn, beans, and squash.

The Sinagua were highly skilled craftsmen and adept traders with networks that extended for hundreds of miles. They built useful tools such as axes, knives, hammers, and manos and metates for grinding corn to flour. Utilizing what was available either in their environment or acquired through trade, they converted animal bones to awls and needles, wove beautiful cloths from cotton, and made decorations and ceremonial pieces from turquoise, shells, and stone.

For three centuries the Sinagua created a complex society and through blending with multiple cultures developed a lifestyle all their own. They left behind incredible examples of their architecture including Tuzigoot, Montezuma Castle, and Montezuma’s Well. It is unknown why the Sinagua left the Verde Valley in the 1400s, but it is believed to be the result of a combination of causes. Hopi legends suggest that the Sinagua may have joined them on their mesas.



Tuzigoot National Monument was created through Presidential Proclamation 2344 on July 25, 1939, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt under the authority of the Antiquities Act thus assuring this place and the accomplishments of the Sinagua are preserved for future generations. Today visitors can explore the ruins by taking the Ruins Loop Trail and the Tavasci Marsh Overlook Trail. The Ruins Loop Trail takes visitors both in and around the ruins, allowing for first-hand experiences of Sinagua life. The Tavasci Marsh Overlook trail provides the visitor with views of the Tavasci Marsh, one of the few freshwater marshes in Arizona and one of the best places to view wildlife. Visitors also have the opportunity to explore Sinagua material culture along with an in-depth look at the natural environment at the Tuzigoot National Monument’s visitor center and museum. The museum, completed in 1936 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is one of the last New Deal-era buildings still being used for its originally designed purpose.