

Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument

A summary of forecasted economic performance in surrounding counties



Photo courtesy Grand Canyon NP

BACKGROUND

The 918,000-acre Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument was designated in 2023 to protect the lands nestled between the Grand Staircase, Vermilion Cliffs, and Pipe Spring national monuments to the north and Grand Canyon National Park to the south. Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument provides varied topography and formations including Shinarump cliffs and canyon corridors that connect the landscape to the Colorado River. Located in Coconino and Mohave counties, Arizona, the monument is jointly managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. Monument designation was led by the Havasupai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Kaibab Paiute Tribe, Las Vegas Band of Paiute Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Navajo Nation, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Pueblo of Zuni, and the Colorado River Indian Tribes.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND USES

The monument allows hiking, wildlife and plant viewing, birdwatching, archeological and historic site viewing, and geologic sightseeing. In 2024, the nearby Grand Canyon National Park attracted 4.9 million visitors.¹

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Travel and tourism are important to communities in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region, representing about 30% of total private wage and salary employment, or 28,503 jobs, in 2024.² Outdoor recreation contributed more than \$14.5 billion to Arizona's economy in 2023.³

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Research shows that conserving public lands like the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument helps to safeguard and highlight amenities that are expected to draw new visitors, businesses, and residents to surrounding communities.⁴

Western counties with protected public lands, like national monuments, are projected to be more successful at attracting fast-growing economic sectors and as a result are expected to grow more quickly, on average, than counties without protected public lands. In addition, protected natural amenities—such as the high desert grasslands, ponderosa pine forests, and sweeping canyon overlooks found at Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument — are projected to help sustain property values and attract new investment.

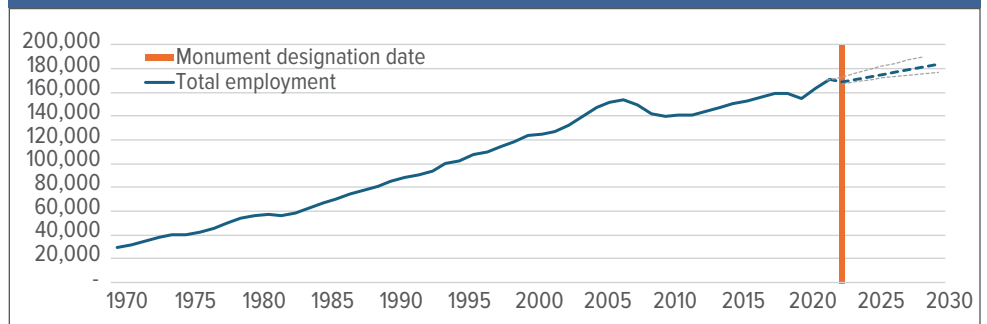
ECONOMY IS FORECASTED TO GROW AFTER DESIGNATION

The economy of Coconino and Mohave counties, Arizona, neighboring the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument has grown since 2001. Since the monument was designated, similar trends are likely to continue.

Based on historical economic performance in Coconino and Mohave counties from 2001 to 2022:⁵

- Employment increased by 37%. By 2030, it is expected to increase by another 7%.
- Population increased by 31%. By 2030, it is expected to increase by another 9%.

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT



SERVICE JOBS INCREASING

Services jobs—such as doctors, hospitality workers, and teachers—account for the majority of future employment growth in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region in recent decades. These jobs are increasingly mobile, and many entrepreneurs locate their businesses in areas with a high quality of life.

From 2001 to 2022 in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region:⁵

- Service jobs grew from 82,365 to 123,170, a 50% increase.
- Non-services jobs grew from 18,903 to 21,971, a 16% increase.

Following monument designation in 2023, forecasts predict continued growth in services jobs and non-services jobs are expected to remain unchanged by 2030.

EMPLOYMENT BY MAJOR INDUSTRY

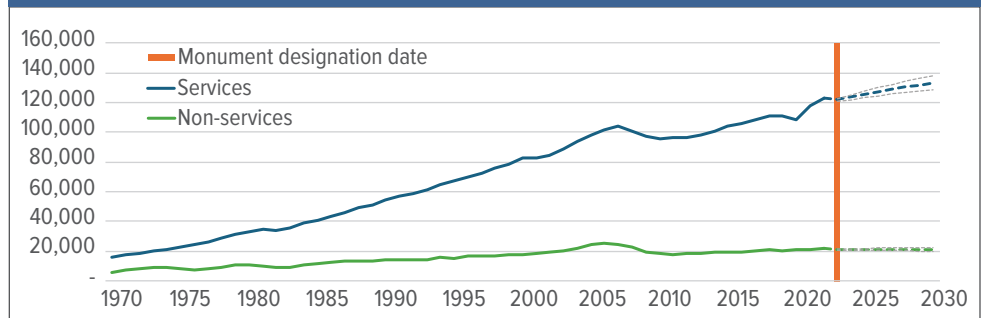




Photo courtesy Amy S. Martin

The communities in Coconino and Mohave counties neighboring the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument are expected to experience strong growth following its designation in 2023. The projected increases in population, jobs, personal income, and per capita income are expected to mirror other Western counties with national monuments or other protected lands

ABOUT

This fact sheet is part of a series created by Headwaters Economics that assesses the economic performance of local communities adjacent to national monuments. Economic growth for 2023–2030 was projected using data for large national monuments in the western United States. Trends before and after monument designation were modeled, controlling for unique characteristics of each monument. For more information, see <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/economic-performance-national-monuments>.

1. National Park Service. (n.d.). Park Statistics: Grand Canyon National Park. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior. Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/grca/learn/management/statistics.htm>
2. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/cew/>
3. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2024). Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved from <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>
4. Headwaters Economics. (2021). National Monuments Can Boost Local Economies. Bozeman, MT: Headwaters Economics. Retrieved from <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/national-monuments-studies/>
5. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2023). Regional Economic Accounts. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved from <https://www.bea.gov/data/economic-accounts/regional>
6. Lawson, M. (2019). Non-Labor Income in the Rural West. Bozeman, MT: Headwaters Economics. Retrieved from <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/papl-lawson/>

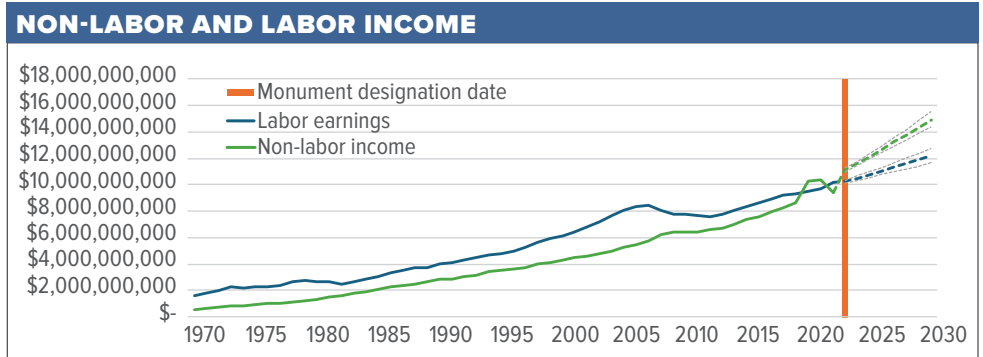
NON-LABOR INCOME IS PROJECTED TO GROW FAST

One of the largest and fastest growing future sources of new personal income in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region is expected to be non-labor income, which is made up of investment income such as dividends, interest and rent, and government transfer payments such as Social Security and Medicare.

For people with investment income and many retirees, protected public lands and recreation provide important aspects of a high quality of life. Non-labor income already represents more than a third of all personal income in the West—and is projected to grow as the Baby Boomer generation retires.⁶

From 2001 to 2022 in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region:⁵

- Non-labor income grew from \$4.52 billion to \$9.46 billion, a 109% increase.
- In 2022 non-labor income made up 48% of total personal income and is projected to account for 56% of all personal income by 2030.



TRADITIONAL JOBS HOLD STEADY

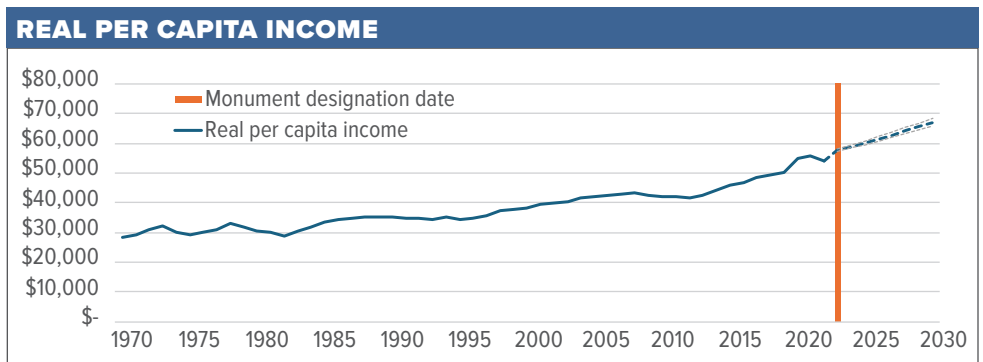
Long before the monument's creation, commodity industries (agriculture, mining, timber) were becoming a smaller share of the overall economy in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region. These industries are projected to remain part of the region's economy in the future.²

PROSPERITY ON THE RISE

As the economy is forecasted to grow following the designation of Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument, per capita income is projected to rise as well. This indicates expected growing prosperity in the region.

From 2001 to 2022 in the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni region:⁵

- Real per capita income increased from \$39,448 to \$53,907, a 37% increase. By 2030, it is expected to increase another 24% to \$67,022.
- Real earnings per job increased from \$52,404 to \$58,874, a 12% increase. By 2030, it is expected to increase another 12% to \$65,747 annually.



Headwaters Economics is an independent, nonprofit research group that works to improve community development and land management decisions.