



Grand Canyon Railway was the only American company to be recognized by Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards.



The daily steam runs to the Grand Canyon were eliminated for environmental reasons, but GCR operates occasional special steam locomotives powered by recycled vegetable oil.



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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

GRAND CANYON RAILWAY ONLY AMERICAN COMPANY RECOGNIZED BY PRESTIGIOUS "RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS"

WILLIAMS, Ariz., January 8, 2013 – [Grand Canyon Railway](#) (GCR) has been recognized as "Highly Commended" by Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards in the category "Responsible Transport."

GCR was the only American company among the finalists in 15 separate categories. More than 1,000 entities worldwide submitted entries for the awards. The overall winner was Reality Tours and Travel of Mumbai, India, and the joint winners in the best responsible transport category were the Big Lemon Bus Company, UK and Green Tomato Cars, UK and Australia.

"We are honored to be recognized by the Responsible Tourism Awards as we know how many companies around the world are doing their part to make our planet a better place," said Bob Baker, general manager of train operations. Baker traveled to London to represent GCR at [World Travel Market \(WTM\)](#) where the awards were presented.

In applying for the awards, GCR noted the challenges of operating steam and diesel locomotives which are typically not environmentally friendly. The main issues GCR faced were the 12,000 gallons of fresh water, 1,200 gallons of fuel and large amounts of petroleum-based lubricants steam locomotives used each day from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

GCR's solution was to take the steam locomotives out of regular service and convert them to use recycled vegetable oil for fuel. Reclaimed rain and snow melt – collected during the winter and Northern Arizona's rainy season – are used in the boiler for steam when available.

Today GCR operates the steam locomotives only on special occasions throughout the year and instead relies on the less-impactful diesel locomotives for its daily runs to the Grand Canyon and back as well as for its popular Polar Express trains during the Christmas holiday season. GCR reduced pollutants significantly in 2007 when it began using Ultra-Low Sulfur Diesel fuel in its diesel locomotives. The Railway also banned F-listed chlorinated solvents used for cleaning resulting in a 98 percent decrease of hazardous waste generation.

GCR has also embarked on programs to recycle used railroad ties, glass, metal electronics, paint and paper. It has installed 10kw solar photovoltaic panels generating 21,000 kwh of electricity at its Grand Depot Café, 252 solar thermal panels reducing natural gas consumption by 17 percent at the Grand Canyon Railway Hotel and a combined wind turbine/solar photovoltaic system to power its radio repeater. The hotel also installed low-flow plumbing fixtures in guest bathrooms and light emitting diodes (LEDs) and compact florescent lighting (CFL).

The Responsible Tourism Awards were created in 2004 and have been sponsored for the past three years by Virgin Holidays. The awards were presented at a ceremony hosted at [World Travel Market \(WTM\)](#), ExCel, London, as part of World Responsible Tourism Day. For more information about all the Award Winners and Highly

Commended organizations, visit the website www.responsibletravelawards.com.

GCR operates daily train service to and from Grand Canyon National Park. The train trip from Williams to Grand Canyon National Park and back takes approximately two hours and 15 minutes each way and runs 65 miles through ponderosa pine forests and scenic desert landscapes. The train offers [five classes of service](#) – coach, first class, observation dome, luxury dome and luxury parlor.

The Grand Canyon Railway Hotel was designed to resemble the historic Fray Marcos Hotel and Williams Depot structures that stand nearby. The hotel is comprised of 199 standard rooms, 87 deluxe rooms, 10 suites and one luxury suite as well as a large enclosed crescent-shaped pool, a spacious meeting room, a large courtyard with, a game room, hot tub and an exercise room.

Grand Canyon Railway is an authorized concessioner of the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service. For more information, www.thetrain.com or call 1-800-THE-TRAIN (1-800-843-8724).

Grand Canyon Railway is operated by [Xanterra Parks & Resorts](#).

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Xanterra Parks & Resorts has been committed to the preservation and protection of the environment for many years. Through its environmental program, "Ecologix," Xanterra Parks & Resorts has been recognized repeatedly for environmental leadership in the hospitality industry and is the recipient of many honors, including major awards from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Travel Industry Association of America, American Hotel and Lodging Association, National Parks Conservation Association, Conde Nast Traveler, National Geographic Traveler, Colorado Department of Public Health, State of Arizona, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and Utah Department of Environmental Quality.

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