



From the Executive Director

by Gus Quinlan



Now in its fifteenth year, NRAF remains dedicated to preserving and protecting the rock art of Nevada through programs that advance better archaeological knowledge of its characteristics. Over the years, priorities have changed as goals are met and new ones developed. In the earliest years of NRAF's existence, site recordation was to the fore, as so many of Nevada's rock art sites were poorly documented.

With several hundred sites now recorded to contemporary standards, including the largest and those most at risk from urban growth, our focus has changed to programs that promote research and public interpretation. Site documentation remains important but now generally focuses on sites that are remote, difficult to reach, and logistically prohibitive for field crews on the scale

of our earliest years. Research and interpreting rock art for the public are increasingly important for raising public appreciation of the state's rich rock art legacy and thereby fostering their support for its preservation.

During 2017, NRAF maintained a busy schedule of fieldwork at rock art sites throughout the state. Fieldwork commenced at Nat/Knapp Canyon, Clark County, where two-thirds of the site was documented (page 4). This is a large and complex site, particularly notable for its challenging terrain. Its rock art is notable for its high formality and numerous intricate abstract designs. Our fieldwork seeks to produce an exhaustive record of the site and resumes in spring 2018 at the portion of the site where footing is particularly hazardous.

The Dry Lakes area, Washoe County has been an ongoing interest since the earliest days of NRAF. This complex of rock art and settlement features contains some 2,000 rock art panels distributed over 115 localities, many forming larger individual sites. It is particularly important for understanding prehistoric rock art's place in the settled landscape



A carved and painted panel in Lincoln County displays a series of footprints, as if climbing the rock face.

and its relationship to other economic activities. During 2017, NRAF completed fieldwork and writing up the results of field investigations carried out over the past three years at Dry Lakes (see page 9). The project focused on 27 sites that were poorly documented,

aiming to define their boundaries and determine their relationship to other archaeological features using modern GIS technology.

During the summer, NRAF continued fieldwork at Massacre Bench, far northwestern Nevada, working at nine sites in the western half of the Massacre Rim Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (page 7). This remote part of the state provides information about rock art associated with landscapes used mostly for large game hunting, in contrast to much of the rock art record elsewhere. This is a multi-year project and in 2018 fieldwork at additional sites in the WSA is planned.

Public interpretation in 2017 focused on preparing a booklet on the rock art of Lincoln County. The booklet provides a comprehensive overview of the age, styles, and archaeological contexts of the county's rock art and places it in its broader regional context.

Lincoln County is home to Nevada's only unique anthropomorph style and is distinguished by its abundant and vivid zoomorphic imagery. The county's rock art, therefore, offers a particularly rich cultural legacy that provides insights into rock art's cultural functions. This

project is supported by an award from the Lincoln County Archaeological Initiative and will be finalized in early 2018.

Fundraising is essential to ensuring that NRAF can support its operations and service its mission. In 2017, grants from public sources continued to play an important role funding programmatic activities and shaping NRAF's annual priorities. Over the years, though, grant opportunities have been diminishing, as federal and state budgets have cut back on historic preservation and culture heritage programs.

This means that like all non-profits, NRAF is increasingly reliant on the support it receives from community organizations and its members. During the summer, the 12th Annual Rockin' Out Art Show, hosted by the Artists Coop of Reno, raised \$2,200 to benefit Nevada rock art. Through their long-term support, the Artists Coop has raised \$26,600 for programs supporting rock art recordation and the generosity of these artists is gratefully acknowledged by NRAF. You too can help, by continuing to champion Nevada's rock art legacy by renewing your membership for 2018. I look forward to working with you as we build upon our accomplishments and work toward a better understanding of Nevada's rock art heritage. ■

Remembering Don Frazier

by Don D. Fowler

Don Frazier, a Lifetime member of the Nevada Rock Art Foundation, died on December 13, 2017 in Phoenix, Arizona, aged 94. Don was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1924. He moved to Nevada with his mother in 1932. She came for a divorce, but stayed and bought a horse ranch near Pyramid Lake, later moving to another ranch on the Truckee River, 14 miles from Reno. Don was largely home schooled, except 9th and 10th grades in Boston, where he met his future wife, Gretchen Fuller, then 13. He attended Reno High for 18 months before joining the Army Air Corps in 1944. After he was discharged in 1946, Don moved back to Boston, went to work for a materials handling company as office boy, and married Gretchen in 1949. With Gretchen at his side, he ultimately developed Frazier Industries into one of the largest materials handling, storage rack, and warehouse construction companies in the world. In the early 1980s, the Fraziers retired and moved to Paradise Valley, Arizona.

Don was fascinated by the archaeological sites, including rock art, he found as he rode out caring for horses on the ranches. In the late 1970s, he began attending the bi-annual Great Basin Anthropological Conferences, where I first met him. In the early 1980s, he annually began donating money to the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) archaeology program, providing graduate fellowships for UNR students. In 1990, Don attended the UNR Archaeological Field School in Warner Valley, Oregon, as a student. Each year, from 1987 on, after the field school, he came from Arizona to go out for two or three weeks with UNR field crews working on BLM surveys and excavations in southern Oregon, Surprise Valley, California, and northwestern Nevada. The surveys recorded numerous sites, including rock art sites. When the Nevada Rock Art Foundation was created, Don became a Lifetime Member. He highly valued his friendship with Alanah Woody before her untimely death. In 1990, he was a member of a crew, directed by Alanah, that spent a month surveying Hawksy Walksy Valley in southern Oregon. They recorded both rock art and Paleo-Archaic sites.

In 1996, UNR awarded Don an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, and made him an Adjunct Professor of Anthropology. He complained that it blew his image of “being ignorant and



Don Frazier (center), with Mary Ricks (right), at the Warner Valley Field School in 1990. Photograph provided by Don Fowler.

uneducated” – hardly the image of a person who, hand in hand with his beloved wife, Gretchen, built a major international industrial company from scratch, was a recognized leader in the materials handling field, and also developed and owned a publishing company. He was a great fan of the Western author Will James, and donated complete sets of autographed James books (with dust jackets) to the UNR Library and the Northeastern Nevada Museum in Elko (the latter donation included some 30+ original James paintings and drawings).

When I retired from UNR in 2005, Don Frazier created the Don Fowler Endowment in Great Basin Archaeology, which annually generates about \$20,000 for graduate fellowships in archaeology.

Don Frazier loved being out in the field in the northern Great Basin, wearing his battered cowboy hat, Levis and boots, working with the UNR students to find and help record archaeological sites. All who knew him will recall his kindness, self-deprecating humor,

and gentle wit. Many will thank him for helping fund their way through graduate school at UNR, that they might go on to professional careers. One of them was Alanah Woody. ■

*Editor’s Note

In 2008, Don Frazier received the Don D. Fowler Lifetime Achievement Award from the Nevada Rock Art Foundation in honor of exceptional contribution to Great Basin Anthropology. This award is named in honor of Don Fowler, NRAF’s charter Board President.

Mary Ricks, pictured with Don Frazier in the photo to the left, wrote her PhD dissertation on northern Great Basin Rock Art: *A Survey and Analysis of Prehistoric Rock Art of the Warner Valley Region, Lake County, Oregon*. 1995. Mary ran the Institutional Studies at Portland State University and retired in 1997, when she was named Research Associate Professor Emerita. Mary and Bill Cannon, Archaeologist BLM Lakeview Field Office, were Master’s students together at Portland State University, and both have pursued rock art studies throughout their careers.










This logo marked Don Frazier’s Lifetime Membership awarded by NRAF.



2018 Membership

As a member of the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION, you will support the protection and preservation of the rock art of Nevada through programs of documentation, research, and public education. As a member, you will receive the *Great Basin Glyph Notes*, the occasional e-newsletter of the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION, and special invitations to lectures, events, and programs.

Membership Levels

- Spiral \$25 (Individual) 
- Bighorn \$50 (Family) 
- Atlatl \$100+ 
- Archer \$250+ 
- Weaver \$500+ 
- Sunburst \$1,000+ 
- Alanah Woody Field of Dots \$5,000 + 

Donations

I would like to make an additional contribution to allow NRAF support its highest priorities and sustain its operational strength

Gift Amount: _____

You can join or renew by completing this application and returning it with your check made payable to NRAF to:

THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION
641 Jones Street
Reno NV 89503

Or you can renew or join online by visiting our website

<http://www.nvrockart.org/pages/support.html>

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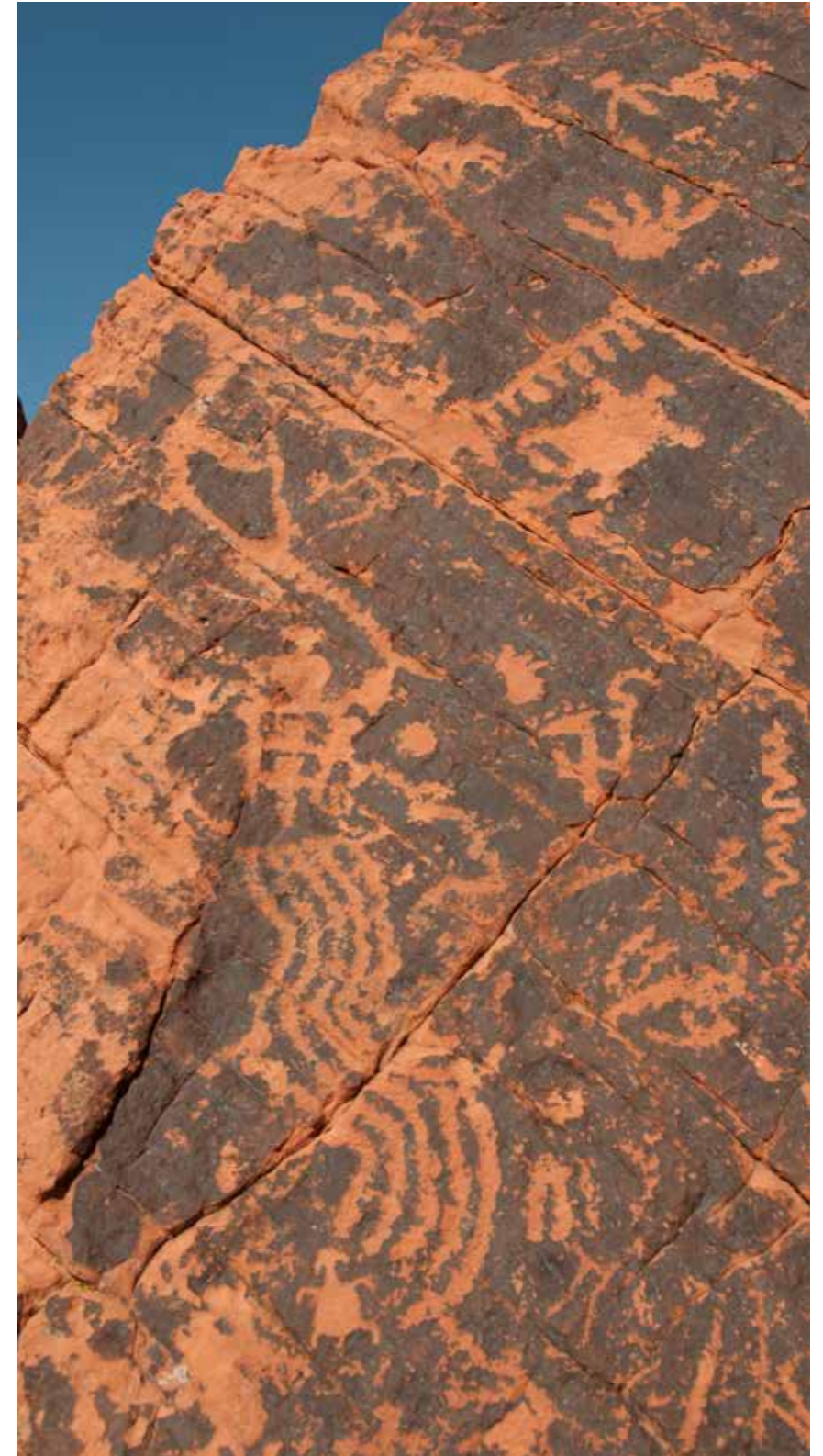
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Nat/Knapp Canyon Documentation

During spring 2017, NRAF staff and volunteers recorded rock art at Nat/Knapp Canyon, a large rock art site in southern Clark County. The site is spatially extensive, stretching 500 m north-south, with rock art distributed in three concentrations on and around the steep slopes of a canyon. During the field session, rock art at two loci was exhaustively recorded. A third locus remains to be systematically recorded. It is on a steep slope thinly mantled with colluvium, making for treacherous footing. Rock art is densest at the northern half of the site, where there are some 300 individual petroglyph panels on boulders and bedrock. Based on sparse associated archaeological features, the site is likely Late Archaic (1,500-700 years ago) and Late Prehistoric (700-150 years ago) in age, and the rock art is very lightly patinated at most.

The site's rock art is predominantly abstract motifs that are characteristic of Basin and Range types, with a small number of rectilinear designs that are representative of Grapevine Canyon style. Panels range in size from single, small designs to very large, complex panels composed of densely arranged motifs. Much of the rock art is distinguished by its high formality and precision of execution.

Curvilinear motifs include circles, concentric circles, circles with external radial lines, circles bisected by a line, cones, spirals, wavy lines, and serpentine lines. The latter include a few examples that may be schematized depictions of snakes. Rectilinear designs include a range of internally decorated rectangles, rakes, back-to-back rakes, and crossed lines. A few triangles and asterisks were also observed. Anthropomorphic imagery is limited to a small number of stick-figures, some of which have exaggerated limbs. There are perhaps as many as ten bighorn sheep motifs, with the only other zoomorphic motifs noted at the site being the possible schematized snakes. Overall, the site is notable for being one of the largest rock art concentrations in southern Nevada.

Work on this project was made possible by a grant from the NARA Foundation, matched by NRAF donor contributions. The project is a partnership with the BLM and we acknowledge the support and assistance of Mark Boatwright, BLM Las Vegas District Office. We thank Cherry Baker, Clay Elting, Gordon Hamilton, Anne Higgins, Janice Hoke, Joan Johnson, and Doug Rorer for their diligence as volunteers, making the field session so successful. ■





Rectilinear design, perhaps suggestive of a plant.



A large, complex curvilinear design covers the entire face of this boulder. The degree of glyph patination is very light and representative of much of the rock art at the site.



Only a small number of bighorn sheep images are present at the site.



Pair of bighorn sheep.





Stick-figure anthropomorph with exaggerated limbs.



Crew members, L to R: Anne Higgins, Janice Hoke, Joan Johnson, Gordon Hamilton, Doug Rorer, Gus Quinlan, and Clay Elton. Not pictured: Cherry Baker and Darla Garey-Sage.



Abstract imagery representative of the highly formal character of much of the site's rock art.



Distinctive and formally executed glyphs grace this boulder.



Massacre Rim WSA



Overview of Massacre Rim Wilderness Study Area

During summer 2017, NRAF carried out fieldwork at the Massacre Rim Wilderness Study Area (WSA), northwestern Nevada. The earliest human settlement of this area took the form of occasional hunting forays by big game hunters in Paleo-Indian times (14,000-8,000 years ago). During the Early Archaic (8,000-6,000 years ago) populations grew slowly and land-use intensified, peaking in the Middle and Late Archaic (6,000-1,500 and 1,500-700 years ago, respectively) when inclusive social groupings, based on

related family households, used the area for hunting large game and harvesting hard seeds and roots. During the Late Prehistoric (700-150 years ago), the area was used far less intensively than during preceding periods, presumably because changes in settlement and economic organization made the area relatively peripheral to hunter-forager strategies.

Nine sites were recorded in the western half of Massacre Rim WSA, ranging in size from a single petroglyph boulder and sparse lithic scatter, to

medium-sized sites associated with an extensive lithic scatter covering several thousand square meters. The sites recorded are mostly associated with basalt outcrops flanking ephemeral drainages on the plateau.

Rock art at the project sites is mostly abstract and representative of well-known Basin and Range tradition types. Individual panels are generally small-scale, comprising a small number of curvilinear designs, mostly circle variants and serpentine lines. Larger, complex panels are composed of

dense arrangements of circle-clusters and concentric circles. Most of the rock art is heavily patinated and can be difficult to discern in other than optimal light. Artifacts of known age found in association with these sites are mostly Middle Archaic projectile points (predominantly Elko series points) with a small number of Late Archaic ones (mainly Rosegate points). Presumably, the rock art at these sites is of similar age and are associated with debris indicative of logistical hunting camps, as ground stone is conspicuous

by its general absence. These hunting expeditions were made from nearby residential bases where numbers of households gathered for social purposes and economic cooperation.

This project is supported by a grant from the BLM. We thank Jen Rovanner, BLM Applegate Field Office, for her assistance and gratefully acknowledge the field assistance provided by Tom Burke and Cary Ingbar. ■





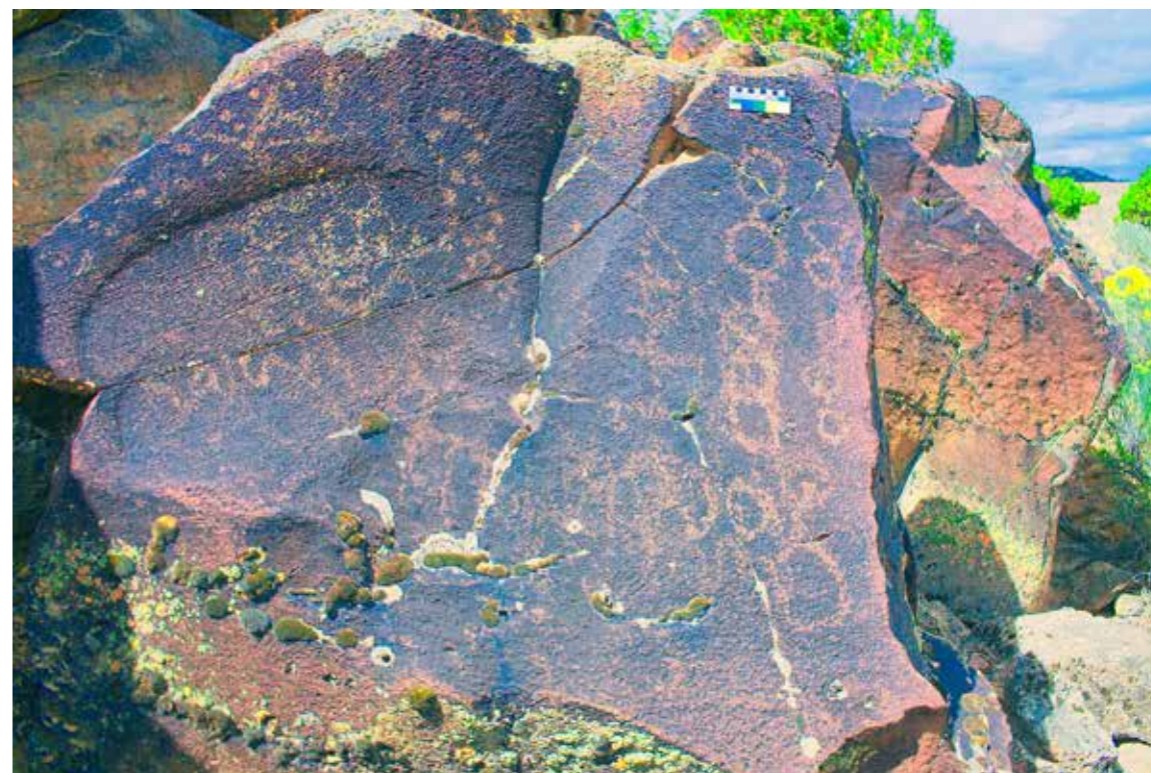
Tom Burke and Cary Ingbar recording rock art flanking a rocky drainage.



The terrain of the Massacre Rim WSA is notably rugged.



Much of the rock art is heavily patinated or contrasts poorly with the background rock varnish



Digital manipulation of the image helps bring out the detail of the panel.





Dry Lakes

A petroglyph boulder with a deeply pecked grid overlooks a shallow stand of water in a usually dry basin

During 2017, NRAF completed fieldwork and writing up the results of field investigations carried out over the past three years at the Dry Lakes complex, northern Nevada. The project sought to revisit known prehistoric rock art sites in the Dry Lakes area that were poorly documented, update their site records, and better determine their boundaries and relationship to other archaeological features using modern GIS technology.

The archaeology of the Dry Lakes area has long been of interest for its intermingling of settlement archaeology

with rock art. Previous archaeological investigations in the area have established that settlement activities broadly span the Middle Archaic through the Late Prehistoric, but with a focus approximately 2,400 years ago to Contact. The earliest systematic work in the area was done in the late 1960s by the Nevada Archaeological Survey (NAS). NAS surveyed 13 sites in the area, drew attention to the relationship between rock art and other archaeological features, and tested and excavated several habitation features. Their work outlined the general

chronology of prehistoric land-use at Dry Lakes. This work was built upon by the Desert Research Institute (DRI) in the 1980s, who conducted pedestrian surveys that led to the identification of an additional 17 archaeological sites. DRI found that these sites represented temporary campsites and logistical work areas, where a range of hunting and foraging activities were carried out in association with rock art.

In the 1990s survey carried out as part of the Tuscarora pipeline project led to the excavation of four sites and more limited investigation of another

nine sites. This work provided better chronological resolution for settlement activities in Dry Lakes and indicated the area was likely used most intensively during the Middle and Late Archaic for seasonal hunting and harvesting. Survey by California State University, Sacramento in 2005 provided additional information on the area's settlement archaeology.

Rock art at Dry Lakes was the focus of research by Alvin McLane, who identified some 115 rock art localities. Because Dry Lakes is a complex of rock art and settlement features, these rock

art localities are often part of a larger site. The close relationship between rock art and habitation debris (particularly ground stone) was the subject of a Master's thesis by Signa Pendegrift. From 2004-2007, NRAF recorded rock art at 30 locations, in support of the BLM Carson District Office's pilot program of site monitoring.

Fieldwork resulted in the recording of 27 sites in the Dry Lakes area. The sites recorded range in size from isolated petroglyph boulders unassociated with surface artifacts or other archaeological features, to

[Continued on Page 10](#)



Dry Lakes.... cont'd from page 9

hundreds of rock art panels associated with scatters of ground stone and waste flakes, and rock alignment features. Eighteen of the sites recorded had no formal site records and the remainder were concentrations of rock art and settlement features that had been documented by focusing on one of these feature types to the exclusion of the other.

The project sites are representative of the general trend for northern Nevada rock art to be dominated by abstract imagery, with a wide range of curvilinear and rectilinear designs that are well-known Basin and Range tradition types. Zoomorphic forms account for less than 3% of all motifs recorded, though sometimes these are visually prominent at individual sites because of their size and central placement. Unsurprisingly, bighorn sheep are most common, accompanied by a small number of lizards and

stylized serpentine lines capped by dots that may be schematic snakes. Anthropomorphs are rare but more common than zoomorphs and are variations of stick-figure types. Unusual features include a row of anthropomorphs holding bows but not as part of a hunting scene. And, rare for northern Nevada, anthropomorphs depicted with ear and head adornment. Time-sensitive themes in the art are mostly Late Archaic, evidenced by a small number of hunting scenes portraying the use of bow and arrows. One panel possibly depicts the use of nets in the hunting of, presumably, small mammals, which is unique to Dry Lakes rock art.

Settlement debris associated with project sites includes circular rock alignments, lithic scatters, and scatters of slab milling stones. These are representative of small camps and logistical work

areas used by small groups of family households. These data support the results of previous archaeological investigations that the Dry Lakes area was used seasonally by hunter-foragers making forays from large village sites elsewhere in the Truckee Meadows area. Intensive settlement use appears focused in the late Middle and Late Archaic, when growing populations encouraged settlement expansion into environments that were of peripheral economic interest in earlier periods.

This project was undertaken as an assistance agreement between the Nevada Rock Art Foundation and the BLM. We thank Rachel Crews, BLM Sierra Front Field Office, for her support during the project. We also thank all the field volunteers who contributed their enthusiasm during the life of this project. ■



Bighorn sheep are the most commonly depicted animal at Dry Lakes, though zoomorphs are generally rare.



Dry Lakes...



Unusual curvilinear designs such as these, are found in small numbers at surrounding sites in western Nevada.



One of the few depictions of a herd of bighorn sheep at Dry Lakes.



Internally divided crescents partly obscured by lichen.



Curvilinear designs, such as circles with external radial lines and serpentine lines, are common designs at Dry Lakes.





NEVADA
ROCK ART
FOUNDATION

*Working for the Conservation of
Nevada's Rock Art Heritage*

Code of Ethics

The Nevada Rock Art Foundation subscribes to the following code of ethics and its members, as a condition of membership, agree to abide by the standards of conduct stated herein.

1. NRAF respects the cultural and spiritual significance of rock art sites and shall not engage in any activity that adversely affects site integrity. NRAF members will be respectful at rock art sites—many are regarded as sacred by indigenous peoples and as such will be treated as a valued part of our shared cultural heritage.

2. NRAF members will strictly adhere to all local, state, and national antiquities laws. All research or educational activities taking place at rock art sites shall be subject to appropriate regulations and property access requirements.

3. All rock art recording shall be nondestructive with regard to the rock art itself and any associated archaeological remains that may be present.

4. No artifacts shall be collected unless the work is done as part of a legally constituted program of archaeological survey or excavation and with express permission of the landholder.

5. No excavation shall be conducted unless the work is done as part of a legally constituted excavation project and with the express permission of the landholder. Removal of soil shall not be undertaken at any time for the sole purpose of exposing subsurface rock art.

The Nevada Rock Art Foundation's principal objectives are to document rock art sites at risk and to work to conserve and ensure the integrity and future protection of all Nevada rock art sites.

The Foundation respects the cultural heritage and traditions of all indigenous people in all its activities.

**The Past
Deserves a Future**

GREAT BASIN GLYPH NOTES

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editor@nvrockart.org

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