



Rock Art Guide

# LincolnCounty Nevada.com

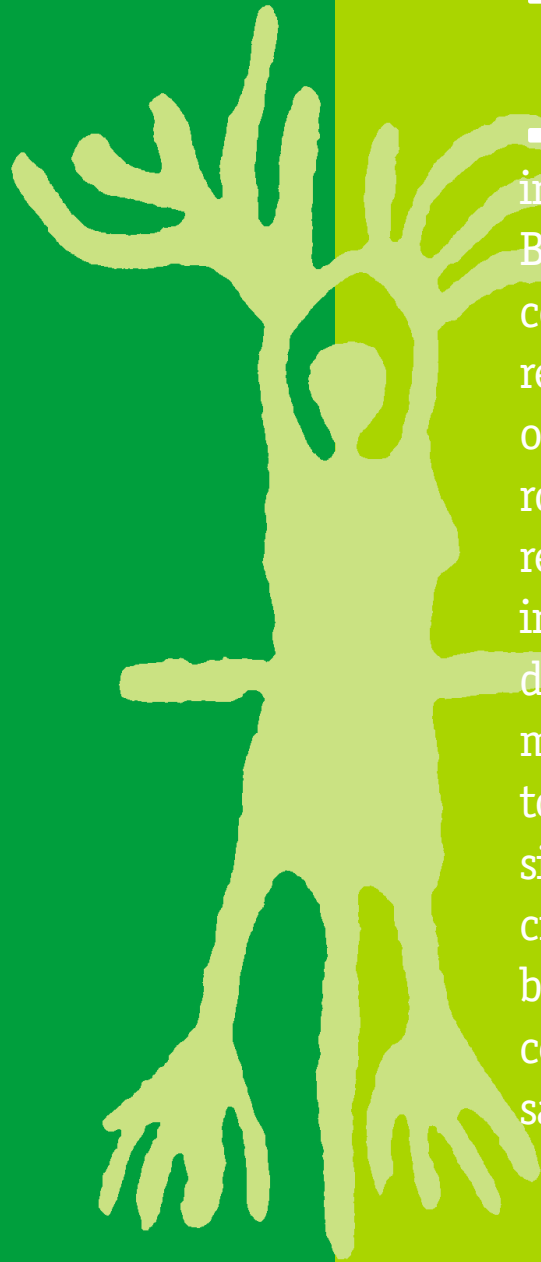
get primitive



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# What is rock art?



**L**ong ago, the ancient inhabitants of the Great Basin created a system of communication that is now referred to as “rock art.” It once played an essential role in the transmission, reception and storage of information. Although it’s difficult to understand the meaning of most rock art today, it was deeply significant to those who created it. Some rock art is believed to have been ceremonial and contained sacred knowledge.

Other rock art might have marked game trails, designated cultural territories or functioned as astronomical markers pertaining to such phenomena as the solstices and equinoxes.

Rock art is etched onto rock faces by pecking, abrading, scratching or a combination of these techniques. It's composed of separate motifs or designs called elements. These elements are often arranged in groups on the sides of rock faces and are referred to as panels. Although much of the imagery appears to be non-representational, it would have been clearly understood by the cultures who created it. Other petroglyphs are more recognizable. Elements resembling animals are called zoomorphs and include all four-legged types or quadrupeds, as well as birds, insects, and other animals.

Mountain sheep are the most common zoomorphs and occur throughout the Great Basin and western United States. Human figures, or anthropomorphs, are the other recognizable forms and exhibit striking variations in design. The predominant rock art style at the Lincoln County sites is the "Great Basin Pecked Style." This includes the substyles of "Great Basin Representational," "Great Basin Curvilinear Abstract" and "Great Basin Rectilinear Abstract."

Even with the development of scientific dating methods, it's still difficult for modern science to accurately calculate the age of most rock art. Sophisticated methods of C-14 dating have been



designed to analyze the tiny particles of organic matter which collect in the grooves of petroglyphs after having been etched onto the rock surface. Despite the continual refining of these methods, there are still significant problems related to the contamination of this organic matter. In some instances, rock art can be related to other related material that is datable and thought to be contemporary with the rock art, but it's often impossible to generate anything other than an estimated timeframe.



### How to find the rock art sites

All of the rock art sites have detailed instructions in this guide. We have also listed helpful GPS coordinates. Depending on what site you visit, there are yellow BLM markers at entryways, gates or the site itself. Each site also has a metal register with a log for visitors to sign in. Always sign in at the register, even if you already signed in during a previous visit. Many of the sites have metal trail markers that you can follow. They are numbered and correspond with the descriptions in this guide. Enjoy your visit!



### Traveling to the rock art sites

Traveling to rock art sites often involves traveling down roads that are not regularly maintained or might be prone to damage by adverse weather. Always let someone know when and where you are going and when you plan to return. Directions can sometimes be confusing, so allow plenty of time to arrive at your destination. Remember your route back to the main road, even if it requires taking notes or using a GPS. Drive at your own risk and always be prepared.

### Vehicle access rating system

**1. Paved road** Local, County, State, Federal maintenance.

No special driving skills required.(US Hwy 93; SR 317,318,319,320, 321,322; city and town roads)

**2. Improved / graded gravel road**

Still passable to most 2WD vehicles, however caution is required and lower speeds may be necessary for vehicles with less clearance. Small rocks (less than 5") may be



embedded in road surface. Sufficient room for passing on most of the road. Some steep grades possible. Not recommended seasonally, during wet and freezing weather. (Beaver Dam Road)

**3. Improved / graded dirt road** Passable by most standard vehicles excluding vehicles with low hanging body panels or vehicles designed for on-road sport driving. Sufficient room for passing on most of the road. Not recommended seasonally, during wet and freezing weather. (Oak Wells Road)



**4. Primitive road / rugged track** Not passable by standard passenger vehicles. Not suitable for 2 WD vehicles. High clearance preferred. 4x4 preferred and low gears often needed. Sand and dry washes may challenge available traction. Trail may be narrow and require backing to allow other vehicles to pass. Not recommended seasonally, during wet and freezing weather. (North Pahroc Road and portions of the Silver State OHV Trail)

**5. Primitive road / challenging** Not within the capability of a stock vehicle without damage. Maintained usually by occasional users. (portions of the Silver State OHV Trail)



# Getting there.

## 1 Ash Springs Rock Art Site

The entrance to Ash Springs Rock Art Site is approximately 5.0 miles south from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling south on U.S. Route 93 towards Alamo, it's on the left (east) side of the road. Take the dirt road to the barbed wire gate, approximately .2 miles from the highway entrance. A yellow BLM marker is just to the right of the gate. Continue to the register.



## 2 Crystal Wash Rock Art Site - Entrance

The entrance and gate to Crystal Wash Rock Art Site is 3.7 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling east on U.S. Route 93, towards Caliente, it's on the left (north) side of the road just past the 54 mile road marker. Traveling west on U.S. Route 93, the entrance is 38.2 miles from Caliente, on the right (north) side. There is a BLM marker just to the left of the barbwire gate. Go through the gate and continue about 50 yards to the register.

### Crystal Wash Rock Art Site - Main Site

The entrance and gate to Crystal Wash Rock Art Site is 3.9 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling east on U.S. Route 93, towards Caliente, it's on the left (north) side of the road just past the 55 mile road marker. Traveling west on U.S. Route 93, the entrance is 38 miles from Caliente, on the right (north) side. The entrance is at a pullout with white trash can and orange netting behind it, and there is a

## 3 Mount Irish Rock Art and Archaeological District

The entrance and gate to Mount Irish Rock Art Site is 3.9 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling north on State Route 318, towards Ely, it is on the left (west) side of the road just past Key Pittman Management Area. A yellow BLM marker is just to the left of the gate. Go through the gate, and continue approximately 9.0 miles to the register.

## 4 Rainbow Canyon Archeological Sites

There are four major stops along Rainbow Canyon, Highway 317. The distance for the first stop is calculated from the town of Caliente at the intersection of Highway 317 and Highway 93. Stop #1, Etna Cave, is 4.9 miles from this

intersection. Stop #2, Grapevine Canyon, is 9.7 miles from Stop #1. Stop #3, Tunnel No 5., is 2.7 Miles from Stop #2. Stop #4, Petroglyph Boulder, is 1.9 miles from Stop #3. The pavement ends 1.9 miles from Stop #4, where the historical Elgin Schoolhouse is located.

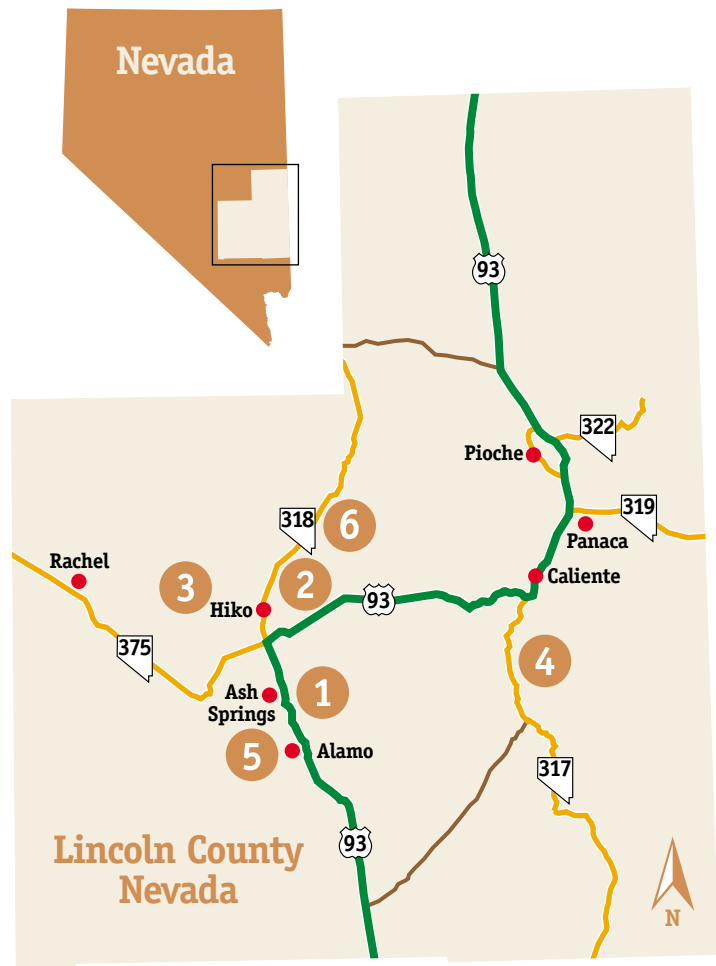
**5 Shooting Gallery Game Drive District**

North Richardville Road, which leads to the entrance of Shooting Gallery Game Drive District, is approximately 9.1 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling south on U.S. Route 93 towards Alamo, North Richardville Road is on the right (west) side of the road just before Windmill Ridge. Follow North Richardville Road to Canyon Road, and turn west. The paved section of Canyon Road ends at .3 miles. Approximately .1 mile from the end of the pavement, take a right at the fork in the road (there is a "dump site" sign to the left.) Follow the main road, despite various branches. At approx. 5.3 miles there is a gate. If it is open, leave it open; if it is closed, open it, drive through, then close it (cattle grazing). At 5.7 miles, turn left and ascend a steep, winding road (note: lowest gear, 4x4 advised from this point on). At 6.6 miles, stay to the right. At 7.1 miles, stay to the right through the valley. At 8.7 miles, there is an extreme right-hand turn on to a narrower road. This road will end at 9.0 miles where there is a parking area and register. From here, follow the path north down the wash, approximately 3/4 mile to a boulder field on the west side of the canyon.

**6 White River Narrows Archaeological District**

The entrance (dirt road) to White River Narrows Archaeological District is 23.0 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling north on

State Route 318 towards Ely, it is 4.1 miles past the "White River Narrows Archaeological District" sign and is on the right (east) side of the road. Traveling south from Ely, it is approximately 90 miles and is on the left (east) side of the road. A yellow BLM marker is just to the right of the dirt road. Go through the gate and continue 2.15 miles to the register.



# Rock art etiquette.



**A**lways exercise courtesy while visiting the archaeological sites and do not disturb any artifacts. Do not drive off existing trails and make sure to close all gates when entering the sites. Remember to leave what you find so that others may have the thrill of discovery. **If you see any vandalism taking place, please call the Bureau of Land Management's resource protection hotline at 1(800) 722-3998.** Excavation, collection, damage or destruction of archaeological resources (pottery, chipped stone, rock art and other resources) is prohibited under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (43 CFR Part 7).

These fragile, irreplaceable heritage resources may not be easily visible so be careful where you walk. Do not touch or step on the rock art. The rock art is very fragile and the application of any material, including

water and especially oil from your skin, can cause irreparable damage. Do not apply any substances to the rock art surface (such as chalk or aluminum powder or even water). Building campfires or burying wastes in the archaeological district is not permitted.

Please help protect the rock art for others to enjoy. Historic, archaeological and fossil sites are special places that tell the story of our past and need to be preserved for the future. Always practice "Leave No Trace" outdoor ethics for heritage sites ([www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org)).



## Volunteer for the Stewardship Program

The Nevada Archaeological Site Stewardship Program, or Nevada Program, is an organization of volunteers sponsored by land managing agencies that share a commitment to the preservation of archaeological resources. The Nevada Program provides an opportunity for concerned citizens to volunteer as site stewards for the federal agencies to monitor the condition of at-risk archaeological sites for signs of natural or man-made damage. Because vandalism, theft, excessive visitation and natural deterioration are impacting the cultural and scientific values of Nevada's archaeological resources Site Stewards are a valued source of protection to our shared heritage. The destruction of archaeological resources continues, in many cases, because of a lack of understanding by the public of the true value of archaeology and a lack of regular surveillance of the sites. Federal agency archaeologists simply do not have time to visit all the sites in their assigned regions. This is where the Nevada Archaeological Site Stewardship Program fits in. The Nevada Program provides the necessary work force of volunteers needed to help protect the archaeological resources from additional harm. If you would like to become an Nevada Site Steward call (702) 486-5011.



### Plan ahead and prepare

- Know the rules and regulations for the area you'll visit.
- Check to be sure the site is open and find out if you need a permit.
- Plan to keep pets and pack animals restrained and away from sites.
- Visit in small groups. Assure supervision of youth groups
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel and dry grasses.
- Stay on designated roads and trails. Soil disturbance can cause significant and irreversible impacts to heritage sites.
- Climbing, sitting or walking on walls and other constructed features weakens them. Walls that are stressed may suddenly collapse.
- Avoid walking on artifacts and middens. Middens are trash dumps that are usually soft dark soil areas near heritage sites.
- Where allowed, camp at least 200 yards from heritage sites.

### Dispose of waste properly

- "Pack it in, pack it out" Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Never dig catholes for human waste disposal near heritage sites. Walk at least 200 yards from these sites.

### Leave what you find

- Artifacts and fossils left where they are help tell the story of the past. Rearranging them limits their scientific value and the experience of future visitors.
- It is illegal to dig, remove or collect artifacts and vertebrate fossils without a permit.
- Leave historic and prehistoric structures intact.
- Take photographs or make a drawing of the rock art or gravestones you visit. Touching, chalking and making rubbings and latex molds cause damage.
- Campfires cause lasting impacts. Use a lightweight stove for cooking.
- Where fires are permitted, use existing fire rings, a fire pan or build a mound fire.
- Collect only dead and downed wood that is clearly not from heritage sites. Collect wood and build fires at least 200 yards away from sites.

### Respect wildlife

- Never feed animals. It changes their natural behaviors and food left behind may alter the heritage site.
- Control pets at all times.

### Be considerate of other visitors

- Respect the past. Heritage sites hold clues to what life was like long ago.
- Educate others never to dig at sites or collect artifacts.
- Graffiti is vandalism. It damages rock art, ruins, cliff walls, trees and historic structures. Attempting to remove graffiti can cause further damage.
- Many Native Americans consider their ancestral lands sacred.

### Report vandalism

If you see people vandalizing sites, report it as soon as possible by contacting the local law enforcement agency or land management office. Never confront or approach vandals or do anything to endanger your safety. From a distance, observe and report their physical description, activities, license plate numbers, time and location. To report vandalism, call 1(800) 722-3998.

### Safety tips

To explore the Lincoln County Rock Art Sites, you will need a comfortable pair of walking shoes (hiking boots or sneakers are preferable), comfortable clothes, sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat. Also, be aware of rattlesnakes. Never put your feet or hands where you cannot see them (ie., in deep nooks and crannies of rocks and boulders while climbing). Most importantly, always bring water. Even though you may only plan to go for a short hike, be sure to always have water with you. Also, always follow desert safety tips that include the following:

- When planning a desert trip, always inform someone where you are going, your route and when you expect to return.
- Use the buddy system, and try to take someone with you. Make sure your vehicle is in good condition.
- Remember where you parked when taking a hike. Take walkie-talkies for communication with each other.
- Wear hiking shoes with good tread and appropriate clothing for the season.
- Carry lots of water, a hat, sunglasses, sun block and gloves.
- Watch out where you walk or put your hands when climbing. Certain times of the year bring out rattlesnakes and critters.
- Most of all, have a good time while assuming a "desert safety mentality." Love nature with caution. Protect our natural resources with vengeance.

# Ter·mi· nol·o·gy

**anthropomorph** A figure that resembles a human body.

**atlatl** A weapon used for hunting that propeled darts or small spears. It was later replaced by the bow and arrow around 500 A.D. The Atlatl is often depicted as a circle with a line through it.

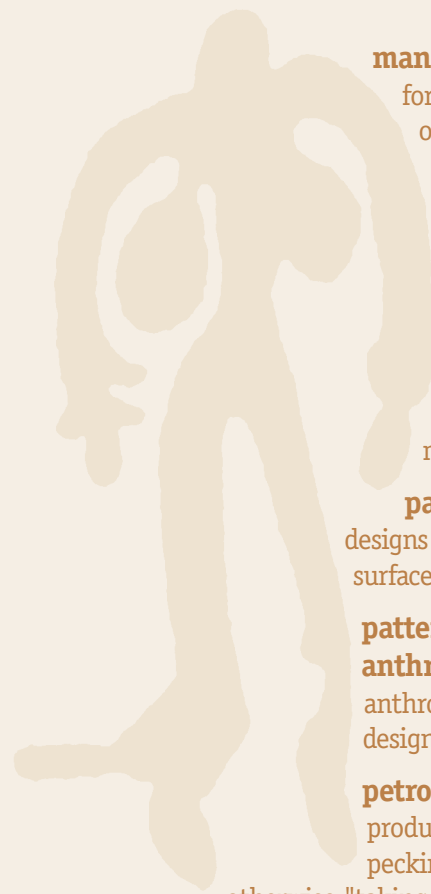
**cupule** A cup shaped depression in the surface produced by grinding, pecking or a combination of both. They are also referred to as "pit-and-groove." These cup-like depressions or pits in boulders are thought to be the oldest form of rock art, first appearing in parts of the Great Basin 7000 years ago.

**desert varnish** (patina) A coating, crust or film often found on rock composed of iron, manganese oxide and clays. Many petroglyphs are covered with desert varnish and over time are revarnished (repatinated). Varied shades of patina indicate age differences.

**elements** Individual marks that comprise portions or parts of a motif.

**geoglyphs** Large ground figures produced either by building up rock alignments (such as cairns) or scraping away rocks or desert pavement (intaglio).

**grinding slick** A flat or shallow surface formed by grinding or crushing of foods with a stone.



**mano** A hand-held stone for grinding foods and other substances (minerals for pigments).

**motif** A single rock art figure comprised of one or more elements.

**metate** Portable milling stone.

**panel** Aggregates of designs occuring on one surface or rock canvas.

**patterned body**

**anthropomorph** (PBA) An anthropomorph with complex designs on the body.

**petroglyph** Rock art produced by engraving, pecking, abrading or

otherwise "taking away" rock surface.

**pictographs** Designs that are applied with pigment to rock surfaces.

**rock art** The broad cover term referring to petroglyphs, pictographs, geoglyphs or any combination of these.

**solid body anthropomorph** (SBA) An anthropomorph without complex designs.

**superimposition** When rock art is covered over by rock art excuted later in time. It is often difficult to view and record superimposed rock art.

**tinajas** Naturally eroded cavities useful for collecting rainfall.

**zoomorph** A figure that resembles an animal body.

# Ash Springs

## 1 Ash Springs Rock Art Site

The entrance to Ash Springs Rock Art Site is approximately 5.0 miles south from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling south on U.S. Route 93 towards Alamo, it's on the left (east) side of the road. Take the dirt road to the barbed wire gate, approximately .2 miles from the highway entrance. A yellow BLM marker is just to the right of the gate. Continue to the register.

**Vehicle access rating:** 3. Improved / graded dirt road

### Useful GPS Coordinates

**Entrance coordinates:** N 37° 27.572, W115° 11.620, elevation 3621 feet

**BLM marker coordinates:** N 37° 27.530, W115° 11.528, elevation 3642 feet

**Gate coordinates:** N 37° 27.494, W115° 11.466, elevation 3655 feet

**Register coordinates:** N 37° 27.453, W115° 11.373, elevation 3691 feet

### About the site

The petroglyphs found at Ash Springs Rock Art Site are typical of much the Great Basin rock art. All petroglyphs at Ash Springs are pecked and display a wide range of line widths. This rock art adorns surfaces that have been subject to weathering and some marked human defacement. Pictographs, or painted rock art, and cupules, or pit-and-groove rock art, are both absent from this site but can be observed at other Lincoln County sites.

This area is known to have been a winter site for the Pahrnanagats, and might have accommodated a small village of 25-40 individuals. Winter was the most permanent phase of the seasons for these people, and was spent in villages, usually around the lower fringes of the pinyon-juniper forests at an altitude of 5000-8000 ft. Although Ash Springs is not in this type of area, and is at a much lower altitude of 3600-3800 ft., the boulders at this site sheltered people from the cold. Water was



ordinarily obtained from snow meltoff, however, the constant availability of warm water at Ash Springs rendered this unnecessary and made this site extremely desirable.

In general, less food gathering took place during the winter months, although there was occasional hunting. Winter was mostly a time of visiting, gambling, tool making and story telling. The presence of debitage, or stone flakes, indicate that many stone tools were created here. These include knives, drills, scrapers, hammerstones, and a variety of projectile points. Tools were fashioned mostly out of cherts which were obtained locally, and obsidians, which came from farther away in Utah. The Pahrnanagats also had a highly specialized basketry tradition. Baskets specifically fashioned to gather and process plant foods included burden baskets, winnowing and parching trays, bowls, and seed beaters. By contrast, pottery was simple and utilitarian, although some vessels had cord-impressed or fingernail-incised decorations. At the Ash Springs Site, sherds of Fremont-like greyware have also been found, indicating the presence of these Southwestern groups who co-existed in this area along with the Pahrnanagats c. AD 500-1250.

### Panels

**Marker #1** Welcome to the Ash Springs Rock Art Site. This site is predominantly a habitation site comprised of two high-intensity areas of domestic activity and includes 12 semi-circular cobblestone alignments along with associated lithic material. The site also extends to the top of the eastern-situated hill known as "Shaman's Vista." Due to the availability of diverse and abundant food resources in the valley, this site

could also have been utilized as a base camp in the winter. In fact, there are ethnographic accounts from the turn of the last century which state that the Pahrnagats did in fact spend winter at Ash Springs, and dispersed to the north during the warm seasons. The presence of the warm natural springs added a unique and special feature that would have been particularly welcome during the cold weather.

A suggestion that might make this tour even more enjoyable would be to sketch the rock art as you make your way along the trail.

**Marker #2** This panel depicts a large bighorn sheep with very long legs on a flat boulder. This image is an example of a representational motif called a zoomorph. This term includes any depiction that is recognizable as some kind of animal, and includes bighorn sheep as well as other quadrupeds and animals in general. Sheep are not only the most common zoomorph in this vicinity, but are found all throughout the western states as well. This rock art panel is very lightly rendered so the image may be difficult to see in direct sunlight.

**Marker #3** This is a simple panel consisting of only a line and a circle. Note the three bullet marks, one inside of the circle and two outside of it. Two smaller milling stones, one on each side, accompany this larger boulder. A grinding slick can be found on each of the milling stones. Foods and other substances (minerals for pigments) were ground into meal on such boulders with the use of a mane, or hand-held stone. Over time this activity would produce a smooth surface, or grinding slick. Portable milling stones, or metates, were also used. Seeds and pinenuts comprised a great deal of the plant foods which were processed. Pinenut meal could be made into soup or mush. Grasshoppers and crickets were dried in the sun, and then also ground into meal and mixed with water and other ingredients (berries, pinenuts) to make cakes. Much of this food could be stored for the winter.

**Marker #4** This marker indicates the entry into an area of heightened domestic activity. Note the concentration of engraved boulders that define a living space. Rock art is frequently associated with domestic sites, and you will observe this trend at the Ash Springs Rock Art Site. There are several grinding slicks in this area – see how many you can find.



Marker #4



Marker #5

**Marker #5** On this panel are two human figures located on the front of the left boulder. These representational motifs are called anthropomorphs, and include any figure that is recognizably human. There is also an anthropomorph on the right hand boulder with his arms outstretched upwards. He is known as the "Hallelujah Man."

**Marker #6** At this marker, is a panel of a large and fantastic zoomorph.

Underneath it is a female anthropomorph known as "Vavavom Woman," which is visible in bright light. Note the two grinding slicks on top of the flat rock.

**Marker #7** The petroglyphs on this large boulder are thought by some to represent solar calendrical devices having to do with the equinoxes and/or solstices. The monitoring of these dates by such methods may have been necessary in determining certain ritual dates that were important to the cultures involved.

**Marker #8** This marker designates one of several boulders in the area to have an associated semicircular cobblestone alignment. There is no art at this particular feature. However, other such similar rock arrangements at this site do have associated rock art.

**Marker #9** This panel with three bighorn sheep is not associated directly with either domestic area, but is significantly removed from them. This panel is difficult to see in bright sunlight. Bighorn sheep were the only large game found locally and were hunted by the Pahrnagats. One rock art theory associates the presence of sheep with hunting magic. However, their presence in rock art may have also had symbolic references having little to do with the hunting of large game. Certain Southern Paiute ethnographies, for example, describe the association of mountain sheep with weather control, in particular the aspect of rain-making. Considering the presence of a permanent and abundant water source, however, perhaps the sheep had some other significance known only to the Pahrnagats.

**Marker #10** From this marker there is a short hike to next rock art panel. Pass to left of the stone formation indicated in the illustration, and look for the trail marker on the other side.



Marker #11

**Marker #11** This panel displays an excellent example of superimposition. This situation occurs when petroglyphs are engraved over already existing ones, an indication that the worked-over motifs were made at an earlier time. This can be used as a general timeframe when attempting to date petroglyphs.

We may not know when or how far apart the two sequences were created, but we do know this site was probably multi-generational. In this case a heavy curvilinear line is superimposed over several sheep. The sheep to the center-left has an atlatl spear embedded in its back (see Marker #15). Also note the associated semi-circular cobblestone alignment as well as the modern defacement on the panel.

**Marker #12** This boulder has two rock art panels which include several zoomorphs. As you can see, they are very damaged and it is possible that some original rock art is now gone. Natural weathering processes and/or vandalism have created the present situation. Note the modern defacement below to the right of the sheep panel, the initials "AR."

**Marker #13** This is a panel of two lightly etched bighorn sheep. Again, this panel is very difficult to see in bright sunlight. Since the time of day seems to be significant in the viewing of so many petroglyphs, it is possible that this may have been done deliberately.

**Marker #14** A panel containing bighorn sheep depictions is situated to the left. To locate a small panel on the other side of the boulder, go around it and look for the panel situated near the ground. Afterwards, backtrack to the trail and follow it out down the road.

**Marker #15** Note the atlatl spear embedded in the back of one of the bighorn sheep. The atlatl, or spearthrower, was a device which enabled an individual to hurl a spear



Marker #14

at a greater distance than was possible unaided. Spears were supplemented by bows and arrows as hunting implements around AD 500, so this petroglyph may have been created before then.

**Marker #16** The location of this marker is situated in the heart of the other locus of concentrated domestic activity. Like the first area, there is a high occurrence of rock art indicating a place of heightened group interaction. Much food processing took place here also, as indicated by the presence of many grinding slicks.



Marker #17

**Marker #17** The last rock art panel on this tour contains an impressive display of several bighorn sheep. Like others at this site, some of the sheep have atlatl spears protruding from their backs. On top of this boulder to the right can be found a concentric circle, a common motif found globally in rock art. After viewing this rock art, backtrack to the road and go to the last Marker #18.

**Marker #18** This marker indicates the end of the officially marked trail. From this location you can see Shaman's Vista on top of the hill to the right. If you desire to end the tour, follow the road and exit to the parking lot. However, you can extend the tour by making an optional hike to the top of Shaman's Vista (refer to the map since there is no marked trail). There is no rock art, however, although there are a number of features at the summit including three rock alignments. There are also considerable lithic scatters indicating the manufacture of stone tools.

# Crystal Wash

## 2 Crystal Wash Rock Art Site - Entrance

The entrance and gate to Crystal Wash Rock Art Site is 3.7 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling east on U.S. Route 93, towards Caliente, it's on the left (north) side of the road just past the 54 mile road marker. Traveling west on U.S. Route 93, the entrance is 38.2 miles from Caliente, on the right (north) side. There is a BLM marker just to the left of the barbwire gate. Go through the gate and continue about 50 yards to the register.

**Vehicle access rating:** 3. Improved / graded dirt road (there is a somewhat steep gully when you first turn off of the main highway)

### Useful GPS Coordinates

**Entrance and gate coordinates:** Entrance and gate coordinates: N 37° 32.969, W115° 10.403, elevation 4077 feet

**Register coordinates:** N 37° 33.038, W115° 10.418, elevation 4049 feet

**Marker 1 coordinates:** N 37° 33.185, W 115° 10.309, elevation 4062 feet (follow the wash for about a half mile)

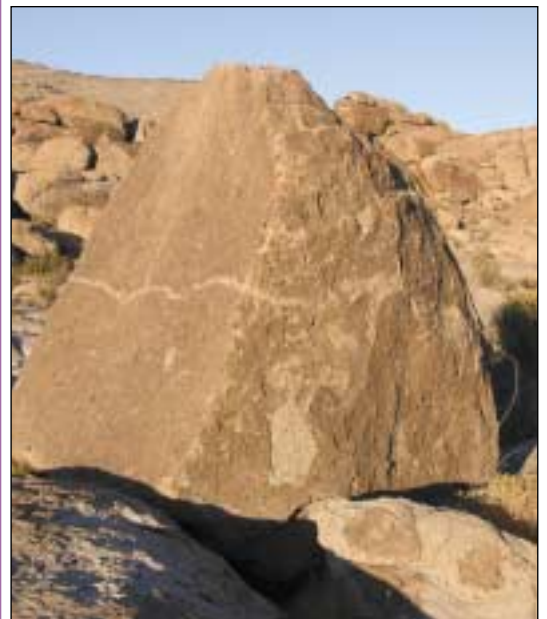
### About the site

Welcome to the Crystal Wash Rock Art Site entrance. Stretching out before you along the wash is the Crystal Wash Entrance Site. Generally speaking, the panels are sporadically placed and there is very little representational imagery at this site. There is, however, one notable exception (see marker #4). There are also two boulders that are heavily covered with petroglyphs and contrast with the mostly cryptic images found at this site. The placement of these petroglyphs suggests a possible travel route, with the rock art providing information along the way. This would have been a public site since the rock art is easily accessible. There is also nothing to suggest this was a habitation site, however, the occasional lithic flake found in the wash indicate that some stone tools were made here.



### Panels

**Marker #1** There are several boulders at this location. There is a thin horizontal line across the face of the uppermost boulder. This is a good example of one of the many non-representational motifs found at this site.



Marker #1

**Marker #2** Most of the petroglyphs at this site tend to be directly associated with the wash, however, this panel is somewhat more set in from the wash than many of the other panels. These non-representational motifs are typical of the Great Basin Curvilinear Abstract Style.



**Marker #3** The small motif depicted on the right is an image that may or may not be an anthropomorph. The small projections extending from this shape could possibly be arms

Marker #3

and legs. There is only one other figure at this site that may be an anthropomorph, and it can be found at marker #4.

**Marker #4** This boulder, located near the division of the wash, is heavily embellished. Underneath the front side is a panel consisting of three very faint, wavy lines. They are waterworn due to the periodic flooding of the wash. On the opposite side is a motif known as a "wearing blanket" that may be an anthropomorph dressed in a woven cloth. This image is similar to others of this type, and is characterized by the "woven" pattern in the body of the figure. Some, like this one here, appear to have fringe at the bottom of the blanket. These figures are generally known as "patterned" anthropomorphs and are depicted with a variety of dots, bars and other designs arranged in a well-ordered manner. Since the Pahrnagats have no known weaving tradition other than baskets, it's possible that this motif represents the presence of Southwestern Puebloan cultures that lived in the area at the same time as the Pahrnagats (AD 500-1250).



Marker #4

*To proceed to Marker #5 and #6, go back to Marker #1. If you're facing the direction of the parking area, turn left at this marker. If you are facing away from the parking area, turn right and follow the trail to Marker #5.*

**Marker #5** The roof of this small shelter has been painted with red ochre, a frequently used pigment made from iron oxide. Although no discernable imagery seems to have been created in the application of this pigment, it's placement was likely deliberate and is therefore not a natural occurrence. This shelter could have been meaningful to the individuals who used it and may have had ritual significance.



Marker #6

**Marker #6** This is a small habitation or campsite that would have accommodated a family-sized group of people. Sites of this type were often found near travel routes and could have functioned as stopovers for travelers on their way to another destination. Note the representational imagery in the form of "zoomorphs" (mountain sheep and other quadrupeds), and anthropomorphs. One figure is a type called an "elongated anthropomorph," but there are also other kinds of anthropomorphs at this site. The grinding slick at this site indicates that the food processing took place here (found in the area to the right of these panels). Grinding slicks were created when food (i.e., seeds, pine nuts) were ground on a flat stone surface with a mano, or a hand-held stone, and over time this activity would produce a smooth surface. Portable grinding stones or "metates," were also used. Besides plants, certain kinds of insects like grasshoppers and crickets, were dried and ground into meal. Minerals like hematite were also ground for use in pigments. These were then mixed with an organic binding agent such as water, plant juice, saliva, or urine to create paint.

*To exit the site, follow the trail markers out to the wash and parking area.*

# Crystal Wash

## 2 Crystal Wash Rock Art Site - Main Site

The entrance and gate to Crystal Wash Rock Art Site is 3.9 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling east on U.S. Route 93, towards Caliente, it's on the left (north) side of the road just past the 55 mile road marker. Traveling west on U.S. Route 93, the entrance is 38 miles from Caliente, on the right (north) side. The entrance is at a pullout with white trash can and orange netting behind it, and there is a yellow BLM marker just to the left of the gate. Go through the gate, veer left (not right) and continue .6 miles to the register.

**Vehicle access rating:** 3. Improved / graded dirt road

### Useful GPS Coordinates

**Entrance and gate coordinates:** N 37° 32.917, W115° 09.467, elevation 4225 feet

**Register coordinates:** N 37° 33.414, W115° 09.671, elevation 4141 feet

**Marker 1:** Directly behind the register

**Marker 2 coordinates:** N 37° 33.331, W 115°09.923, elevation 4132 feet

**Marker 5 coordinates:** N 37° 33.296, W115°09.991, elevation 4087 feet

### About the site

Petroglyphs are the dominant rock art form at Crystal Wash and they are etched onto rockfaces by pecking, abrading, scratching, or a combination of these techniques. Pictographs, or painted rock art, is only represented in small quantities at Crystal Wash. A third type of rock art known as cupules or pit-and-groove rock art, are cuplike depressions or pits in boulders and are thought to be the oldest form of rock art, first appearing in parts of the Great Basin 7000 years ago. There is one example of this rock art at Marker #6.

The Main Site of the Crystal Wash Rock Art Site is a large habitation area comprised of a triangular configuration of three



boulder groupings inscribed with rock art. It was frequented by the Pahranaagats, and this site is large enough to have accommodated a village and is thought to have been a winter site. Water was ordinarily obtained from snow meltoff, and the large boulders provided suitable protection against the wind. This location was climatically more desirable than the lower valleys which were colder during the winter months.

Aside from much lithic material and a few ceramic sherds, four hearths and some cobblestone alignments have been found at this site, signifying the presence of wickiups, which were typical camp shelters. During the cold months, less food gathering took place although there was occasional hunting. Instead, winter was a time of visiting, and gambling and story telling were frequent activities. The presence of much debitage, or stone flakes, indicate that many stone tools were created here. These include knives, drills, scrapers, hammerstones, and a variety of projectile points. Tools were fashioned mostly out of cherts and obsidians which were obtained locally. The Pahranaagats also had a highly specialized basketry tradition. Baskets specifically fashioned to gather and process plant foods included burden baskets, winnowing and parching trays, bowls, and seed beaters. By contrast, pottery was simple and utilitarian, although some vessels had cord-impressed or fingernail-incised decorations.



## Panels

**Marker #1** Welcome to Crystal Wash! A suggestion that might make this tour even more enjoyable would be to sketch the rock art as you make your way along the trail. The two large boulders in front of you designate a small domestic site. Rock art is frequently associated with domestic sites, and you will observe this tendency throughout the entire Crystal Wash Site. The only rock art at this location not inscribed on these boulders can be found on a smaller, flat rock on the ground approximately 25" slightly to the right behind them. Be careful not to step on the rock art. There is also a grinding slick on this rock in addition to at least seven other known grinding slicks at this site. Two are located under the small overhang in the front, and two can be found to the right and left of these boulders. Foods and other substances (minerals for pigments) were ground into meal on grinding slicks with the use of a mano, or hand-held stone. Seeds and pinenuts comprised a great deal of the plant foods which were processed. Pinenut meal could be made into soup or mush. Grasshoppers and crickets were first dried in the sun, then ground into meal and mixed with water and other ingredients (berries, pinenuts) to make cakes. Much of this food could be stored for the winter.



Marker #3

enabled an individual to hurl a spear at a greater distance than was possible unaided. Spears were supplemented by bows and arrows as hunting implements around AD 500, so this petroglyph may have been created before then. bighorn sheep were the only large game found locally. They were hunted by the Pahrnagats, however, their presence in rock art may have had symbolic references having little to do with the hunting of large game. Certain Southern Paiute ethnographies, for example, described the association of bighorn sheep with weather control, in particular the aspect of rain-making.

**Marker #4** In front of this marker you will observe two large boulders engraved with petroglyphs. The panel directly in front of you has evidence of superposition. This situation occurs when petroglyphs are engraved over already existing ones, an indication that the worked-over petroglyphs were made at an earlier time. This can be used as a general timeframe when attempting to date petroglyphs. We may not know when or how far apart the two sequences were created, but we do know this site was probably multi-generational. There is a grinding slick on the flat rock face in front of these two boulders. Note the representational content of this rock art (and other rock art throughout the site) in the form of anthropomorphs (human figures) and zoomorphs (bighorn sheep and other quadrupeds or animals). Especially noteworthy is the banded anthropomorph motif found farthest to the right (see insert). Variations of this figure type are found locally and may have been cultural markers.



Marker #2

**Marker #2** While facing this marker, you will see a small-to-medium boulder on the left which has most of its rockfaces engraved with petroglyphs. Note the petroglyphs on what looks like the "seat"; these are extremely faded. There is also a tiny mountain sheep on the left side of this boulder that may or may not be readily visible depending on the time of day. In front of the marker is a large boulder with petroglyphs, and the small rock attached to its left displays four bighorn sheep. Directly before the marker is a flat rock with a grinding slick, and to the right are more petroglyphs. There are other petroglyphs

and grinding slicks at this site that are not outlined in this guide – see how many you can find.

**Marker #3** Directly in front of this marker is a low boulder with a grinding slick. Note the two sheep motifs to the left. The single sheep to the right is quite faded and difficult to see. Above the grinding slick is a small petroglyph which may depict an atlatl. The atlatl, or spearthrower, was a device which



Marker #5

**Marker #5** Situated before this marker are several flat boulders engraved with a great deal of remarkable imagery. Although it is not possible to know the meaning of these images, they undoubtedly contain information meaningful to the Pahrnagats. Like the petroglyphs at Marker #4, there are also some instances of superposition in these

panels. Please be very careful not to step on this rock art, as it is extremely fragile. When you are finished, you may go back carefully the way you came and follow the trail markers to Marker #6.



Marker #6

**Marker #6** In addition to rock art, this marker also designates the location of what had been a wickiup, or typical structure used by the Pahrnanagats. These shelters were constructed of frameworks made of poles covered with grass brush, rushes, or arrow weed. They were often conical in shape

and usually had a smokehole. For fuel, the Pahrnanagats would have used local brush, which was in ample supply. To the left of this marker is dark stain indicating the remains of a hearth, and in front of it is a flat boulder with several "pocked" impressions, a form of rock art known as "cupules." On the far right end of this boulder is a large hole, or mortar, which was used along with a stone pestle to process seeds, nuts, or possibly to mix pigments.

**Marker #7** In front of this marker is a rock shelter engraved with petroglyphs. This panel is unusual in that it is the only rock art at the main site to display pigment, or pictographs (rock art that is painted). The only other example of pigment existing at the Crystal Wash Site is at Marker #5 at the Entrance Site. The red pigment was a frequently used color obtained from hematite, a form of iron oxide. It is likely that at one time more color was present on this panel, but pigment deteriorates very quickly so whatever color was originally here has since disappeared. When pictographs are present, however, they provide an opportunity for dating that is not possible with petroglyphs. Since pigment it is often mixed with an organic binder (saliva, blood, or urine), these binders can then be C-14 dated with a great deal more certainty than organic material in rock art that is engraved or pecked.



Marker #8

**Marker #8** The panel before you contains a striking assemblage of anthropomorphic figures and is unique to the entire site. This structure of boulders may have been used as a

speech platform. There is ample room to accommodate an audience, and the rock art itself suggests a gathering of people. Although the Pahrnanagats recognized no absolute political authority, a temporary chief was appointed during times of aggregation. His function was more that of an arbiter and as an organizer of group activities (food-collecting expeditions, certain ceremonies). The village would congregate in the morning to receive the chief's instructions if specific activities were planned for the day, and listen to him orate from the top of the platform. Since it is possible to see a considerable distance from the top of these boulders, they would also have functioned as an excellent lookout.

**Marker #9** This rock art panel is one of the few occurring outside of the triangular composition of boulders which comprises the living area of the Main Site. Because of its exterior location, it may have been used as some kind of marker. Certain petroglyphs are thought to have functioned as maps; perhaps the meandering line on this boulder is one example of this site.

Follow the trail carefully to Marker #10, as it involves some climbing over rocks.



Marker #10

**Marker #10** This final marker designates the rock shelter in front of you. Inside the shelter are some petroglyphs in addition to three grinding slicks. The private and less accessible nature of this shelter as well as the cramped space within it suggest it had special significance and was therefore set apart from the routine of daily living.

*To leave the site, follow the trail markers out to the wash and parking area.*

# Mount Irish

## 3 Mount Irish Rock Art and Archaeological District

The entrance and gate to Mount Irish Rock Art Site is 3.9 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling north on State Route 318, towards Ely, it is on the left (west) side of the road just past Key Pittman Management Area. A yellow BLM marker is just to the left of the gate. Go through the gate, and continue approximately 9.0 miles to the register.

**Vehicle access rating:** 4. Primitive road / rugged track

### Useful GPS Coordinates

**Entrance and gate coordinates:** N 37° 33.992, W 115° 13.882, elevation 3859 feet

**Mount Irish Rock Art and Archaeological District sign coordinates:** N 37° 36.320, W 115° 20.591, elevation 5161 feet

**Monolith Echo Panel coordinates:** N 37° 36.295, W 115° 20.654, elevation 5170 feet

**Paiute Rocks, Register 1 coordinates:** N 37°36.366, W 115° 22.395, elevation 5619 feet

**Shaman Knob, Register 2 coordinates:** N 37°36.392, W 115° 22.702, elevation 5738 feet

**Shaman Hill, Register 3 coordinates:** N 37°36.413, W 115° 22.722, elevation 5759 feet

### About the site

The Mount Irish site is rich with Rock Art, with three distinct areas to explore. The numerous petroglyphs, along with scatters of chipped and ground-stone, pottery and rock shelters, suggest the sites were occupied from 1000 B.C. to the 1860s. Most of the petroglyphs are of the Great Basin Representational style (A.D. 1-1500) often depicting bighorn sheep and deer.



The earliest occupation in southern Nevada began about 11,000 B.C. at Tule Springs in the northwest portion of the Las Vegas Valley. The ancestries of the earliest Native Americans have not been traced to the present, but the contemporary Paiutes and Shoshones are considered the descendants of the last hunter-gatherers in southern Nevada.

The archaeological record in southern Nevada reflects the activities and life ways of people who, during the past several thousand years, were experts in living in an arid environment. They learned to utilize natural resources and were "hunters and gatherers" of their food. They lived in open camps, brush structures and caves. They moved in family groups throughout a selected territory collecting seeds and capturing animals on a seasonal basis.



### Monolith Echo Panel

This panel is located just after the first Mt. Irish interpretive sign, on the left side of the road, looking south. If you shout out towards the panel, you can hear an echo. Sheep, a horned anthropomorph and many abstract elements are depicted.

## Paiute Rock

The Paiute Rock area in the Mt. Irish Rock Art District (along with several other locations) served as a camping activity center for thousands of years. The predominant rock art style is the Great Basin Pecked Style. This includes the substyles of Great Basin Representational, Great Basin Curvilinear Abstract, and Great Basin Rectilinear Abstract. There are also numerous examples of the Great Basin Painted Style in the Mt. Irish District.

## Panels

**Marker #1 Atlatl Rock.** Directly behind the Mt. Irish interpretive sign is a low boulder with many interesting petroglyphs. Noteworthy is the possible atlatl (a hunting weapon) which, according to many experts, was replaced by the bow and arrow in western North America approximately 1500 years ago. Continue around the rock (north) to Marker #2.



Marker #2

**Marker #2 Is This a Family?** Human forms (anthropomorphs) can be seen on a large boulder approximately 3 feet up from the ground. To the right of the figures is a Desert Bighorn Sheep motif in a natural rock pocket. Walking to the right, you will see Marker #3.

**Marker #3 Lower Boulder Rock Art.** A juniper tree partially obstructs the view of the lower panel with dots and curvilinear elements. Go around the juniper tree and turn left (west) to Marker #4.

**Marker #4 Two Panels.** In front of you are 2 panels. Different color levels of desert varnish (patina) can be observed. There is probably a large time difference between these patina layers. Enjoy this peaceful setting. Follow along boulders to Marker #5.



Marker #4

**Marker #5 Does this remind you of a happy person?** Human motifs, curvilinear elements and multiple circles dominate this panel.

**Marker #6 What is it? Deer, elk or other?** In a natural sheltered area, you will notice a well preserved zoomorphic figure. Continue downhill to the right.

**Marker #7 bighorn sheep and deer (or elk).** On a large boulder, fairly low to the ground, you will see more zoomorphic figures nicely preserved and looking picturesque with the colorful lichen.

**Marker #8 Abstract sheep and concentric circles.**

Following around and heading toward the road, you will observe



Marker #9

several panels of rock art. At this marker, you will notice an abstract sheep and concentric circle. On the large boulder to the right, how many sheep can you point out (without touching the panel)?

**Marker #9 Shield.** Coming around to the most densely covered rock art panels, it is not hard to imagine this area as a gathering place for activities both social and spiritual.

The fun challenge is trying to figure who these people were, what were their likes and dislikes and exactly how to understand their "writings on the walls."

## Shaman Knob

As you enjoy a leisure walk around Shaman Knob, you will be amazed at the beauty of the location and the masterfully created panels by an ancient tribal society. Some of the Pahranaagat figures are curvilinear, and some are rectilinear in form.

Unique to the Pahranaagat Valley, is the Pahranaagat anthropomorph often called the "Pahranaagat Man" or "P-Man." The spatial placement of this Pahranaagat figure may be representative of a "power being" of perhaps a spiritual or supernatural nature. Many of the Pahranaagat figures have "attendants" or "protectors." When walking around Shaman Knob and Shaman Hill area, note the positioning of the large Pahranaagat figures.

Study of the Shaman Knob suggests that it was a major center of activity of repeated camping by hunter-gatherers over thousand of years. There seems to be a close relationship between the system of religious beliefs and rituals, and the rock art and landscape.



Marker #1

## Panels

**Marker #1 Patterned Body Anthropomorphs (PBAs).** There are many interesting motifs on the boulders and panels in this area. High up on the large panel facing southwest can be seen patterned body anthropomorphs (PBAs) and a Pahrnagat figure (not easy to spot on a bright sunny day).

**Marker #2 Walkway (PBAs).** As you walk through the natural passageway, look to the left for PBAs and a solid Body Anthropomorph (SBA). The SBA has horns. Continue on through the passageway veering left.

**Marker #3 Pahrnagat Man.** This Pahrnagat figure is a very impressive sight standing two feet tall. It is 4.5 feet from the ground. There are several PBAs placed around it. On the same panel to the left of the P-Man is faint red paint.

**Marker #4 Is this a spaceship or a sombrero?** Continuing to the right is a low panel with stick people, zoomorphic figures and other curious motifs. What do you see when you look at the panel? Is there a spaceship with an alien next to it, or could the "spaceship" really be a sombrero type hat? Perhaps there are other ideas that come to mind.

On top of the boulder is a large looking tinaja, a naturally eroded cavity useful for collecting rainfall.

At this point, you might want to enjoy looking around before you back track to the register.



Marker #4

## Shaman Hill

The trail that wraps around the base of Shaman Hill provides many beautiful examples of Mt. Irish rock art. One of the most impressive panels, the Many Sheep Panel, can be seen at the end of this trail.

## Panels

**Marker #1 Pahrnagat Figure, Bee Hive Clusters.** One of the large Pahrnagat figures, this impressive figure is positioned 4.5 feet up the boulder face. Its head and left arm are partially covered by lichen. It is similar in size to the Pahrnagat Man #3 at Shaman Knob. From its prominent position, it is surrounded by other petroglyph panels of figurative motifs.

See if you can locate the bee hive clusters on a panel behind and to the right of the P-Man panel.



Marker #1

**Marker #2 Circle Crosses.** As you continue to your right, you will notice a large fractured boulder with numerous elements. The circled crosses are not unique to Mt. Irish but occur in rock art in many regions in North America.

**Marker #3 Horned Man (Solid Body Anthropomorph).** Farther along and into a small natural enclosure is what appears to be a horned resembling the body of a Pahrnagat Man. Approx. 12X7 inches, it stands a little over 2 ft. from the ground. There is possibly an atlatl in its hand.

**Marker #4 Blanket PBA Panel.** Is this a PBA? What do you think? As you are studying the setting, glance up and to your right to see a group of zoomorphic figures keeping an eye on the area from their boulder.

**Marker #5 Princess Pahrnagat Anthropomorph.** As you look up hill, you will see an impressively large anthropomorph looking down from a prominent position on the panel. Well preserved and beautiful, could this figure be a female?

**Marker #6 Lizard Panel.** This busy panel appears to have at least one lizard, sheep, a fence and circle. There are natural depressions (dimples) that have been outlined or defined. Continue to your left, and do a little jog to the right into a sheltered area for Marker #7.



Marker #6

**Marker #7 PBA Atlatl Panel.** Looking down from its impressive position, you will see a very large PBA with a possible atlatl. Other motifs accompany it. Walk downhill to your left to continue to Marker #8.

**Marker #8 Many Sheep Panel.** You will be stunned by the beauty of this gallery. Before you return to the parking area, why not take a few minutes to enjoy the sounds and smells?



Marker #8

# Rainbow Canyon



4

## Rainbow Canyon Archeological Sites

There are four major stops along Rainbow Canyon, Highway 317. The distances are calculated from the town of Caliente, at the intersection of Highway 317 and Highway 93. These distances along with GPS coordinates are listed with the information for each of the stops.

**Vehicle access rating:** 1. Paved road\*

\*Caution: Due to severe flooding in January of 2005, the road through Rainbow Canyon is extremely damaged after the first 10 miles. There are many areas where the pavement is buckled or destroyed, resulting in deep drop-offs. If you travel this road, proceed slowly with extreme caution. It is not scheduled to be repaired until sometime after fall, 2008.

### About the site

Ten thousand years ago, the people living in Eastern Nevada sought well-watered oases like Rainbow Canyon. Distinctive cultures, known today as the Desert Archaic Fremont, and Southern Paiute, visited Rainbow Canyon and used Etna Cave as a temporary home. Their lifestyles were organized around the hunting of bighorn sheep, deer and rabbits. They also gathered pinyon nuts, the seeds of Indian Rice Grass and other local plants.

Unlike the earlier Desert Archaic people, the Fremont and Southern Paiute grew crops, perhaps planting small fields of corn. Beans, squash and sunflowers were grown in the flood plain of Meadow Valley Wash. They also carefully crafted pottery, stone tools, hide moccasins and baskets. A large number of perishable artifacts, including sandal fragments and herb bundles, have helped archeologists to date when these different groups were using the natural resources of the canyon.

By AD 1300, the Fremont had disappeared from the archeological record of Southern Nevada, perhaps as a result of long-term droughts or other, as yet, unknown factors. Early 19th century Anglo-European explorers reported finding only small groups of Southern Paiutes, who still followed the age old hunting and gathering practices of the first visitors to Rainbow Canyon.

Rock art, appearing as petroglyphs and pictographs, offers clues to the beliefs and artistic concepts of these people.



### Locations

#### Stop #1 Etna Cave

(4.9 miles from the junction of Highway 317 and Highway 93)

**Entrance (trestle) coordinates:** N 37° 33.412, W 114° 34.413, elevation 4372 feet



**Tan cliff with pictograph panel:** N 37° 33.312, W 114° 34.414, elevation 4141 feet

**Etna Cave coordinates:** N 37° 33.413, W 114° 34.413, elevation 4376 feet

Park on the right shoulder and walk under the train trestle. Follow the sandy wash through a small tunnel. Continue along the wash for about 400 feet, then look to your left on the tan cliff face for a series of red-orange pictographs. The pictographs were painted by unknown prehistoric artists, using hematite, an iron oxide pigment that may have been obtained from the nearby cliffs. The hundreds of artifacts excavated document a 5,000 year sequence of prehistoric occupation by different groups.



#### Stop #2 Grapevine Canyon

(9.7 miles from Stop #1)

**Dirt road entrance coordinates:** N 37° 25.747, W 114° 33.746, elevation 3653 feet

**Panel coordinates:** N 37° 33.406, W 114° 34.208, elevation 4208 feet

Watch for a left turn-off, just after passing under a railroad bridge. Follow the dirt road for about .6 mile. Park at a grove of trees. Rock art can be viewed by walking about 100 feet back along the road from the parking area, then follow a well traveled foot path up the slope to a rock overhang. There are pictographs and petroglyphs, with more petroglyphs along the cliff face on the south side of the canyon.



# Shooting Gallery



**Stop #3 Tunnel No 5.**  
(2.7 Miles from Stop #2)

**Dirt road entrance coordinates:** N 37° 33.389, W 114° 34.202, elevation 4134 feet

**Sheep boulder coordinates:** N 37° 23.534, W 114° 33.598, elevation 4208 feet

Just past the railroad bridge look for a dirt road on the right side. Park here and walk north along the road for about 400 feet towards the tunnel No. 5. Look west and uphill before the tunnel at the

darkly stained rocks (desert varnish) strewn along the hillside. Several of these blocks have petroglyphs of bighorn sheep, and possibly elk, carved on the sides and tops.

**Stop #4 Petroglyph Boulder**  
(1.9 miles from Stop #3)

**Entrance coordinates:** N 37° 23.627, W 114° 33.518, elevation 3631 feet

Park on the right shoulder of the road at mile marker 39 and look for a boulder covered with petroglyphs. Is this doodling?

**End of pavement:** 1.9 miles from Stop #4



## 5 Shooting Gallery Game Drive District

North Richardville Road, which leads to the entrance of Shooting Gallery Game Drive District, is approximately 9.1 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling south on U.S. Route 93 towards Alamo, North Richardville Road is on the right (west) side of the road just before Windmill Ridge. Follow North Richardville Road to Canyon Road, and turn west. The paved section of Canyon Road ends at .3 miles. Approximately .1 mile from the end of the pavement, take a right at the fork in the road (there is a "dump site" sign to the left.) Follow the main road, despite various branches. At approx. 5.3 miles there is a gate. If it is open, leave it open; if it is closed, open it, drive through, then close it (cattle grazing). At 5.7 miles, turn left and ascend a steep, winding road (note: lowest gear, 4x4 advised from this point on). At 6.6 miles, stay to the right. At 7.1 miles, stay to the right through the valley. At 8.7 miles, there is an extreme right-hand turn on to a narrower road. This road will end at 9.0 miles where there is a parking area and register. From here, follow the path north down the wash, approximately 3/4 mile to a boulder field on the west side of the canyon.



**Vehicle access rating:** 4. Primitive road / rugged track

**Useful GPS Coordinates**

**North Richardville Road entrance:** N 37° 24.817, W 115° 10.328, elevation 3560 feet

**Canyon Road entrance coordinates:** N 37° 23.713, W 115° 10.475, elevation 3521 feet

**South Richardville Road entrance:** N 37° 23.383, W 115° 09.750, elevation 3554 feet

**Register coordinates:** N 37° 21.716, W 115° 16.674, elevation 3768 feet

**About the site**

The Shooting Gallery Game Drive District lies in Curtis Canyon, about 8 miles west of Alamo. The Shooting Gallery gets its name from evidence at this location that pre-historic inhabitants had created hunting blinds and a system of rock arrangements to channel herds of large game towards hunters.

There is no formal trail system established, so walk carefully to avoid stepping on any rock art. Looking up from the valley floor you might see rock piles along the hilltops. These are thought to have been made by early hunters to scare Desert Bighorn Sheep, fleeing up the slopes, back down towards the hunting blinds. Instinctively, Bighorn Sheep will escape danger by quickly climbing steep slopes. The rock piles and upright rocks could have looked like hunters standing in their escape path.

This unique combination of a narrow valley, seasonally abundant water, and a good grazing area for sheep and deer is what makes the Shooting Gallery one of the few known game



drives sites in central and southern Nevada. Archeologists who study this area, suspect that it had been inhabited by several different groups from 500 to 2,000 years ago. Ongoing research could lead to evidence of even earlier cultures living and hunting in this valley.

The rock art at Shooting Gallery are representative of the three distinct styles found within the Pahrnagat Valley: The Great Basin Abstract Style, that is predominately abstract symbols (circles, grids, etc.); the Pahrnagat Representational Style (bighorn sheep, deer and anthromorphs – human-like characters with rectangular bodies and solidly pecked out bodies and heads); and the Fremont Representational Style, that resembles the classic trapezoidal bodied Anthromorphs and Quadrapeds.

**Coordinates for panels of interest**

- Stop 1** N 37° 36.100, W 115° 27.930
- Stop 2** N 37° 36.119, W 115° 27.920
- Stop 3** N 37° 36.156, W 115° 27.908
- Stop 4** N 37° 36.400, W 115° 27.926
- Stop 5** N 37° 36.418, W 115° 27.218
- Stop 6** N 37° 36.481, W 115° 27.291
- Stop 7** N 37° 36.397, W 115° 27.222
- Stop 8** N 37° 36.197, W 115° 27.224
- Stop 9** N 37° 36.171, W 115° 27.146
- Stop 10** N 37° 36.073, W 115° 27.064
- Stop 11** N 37° 36.036, W 115° 27.067
- Stop 12** N 37° 36.038, W 115° 27.079



# White River Narrows



## About the site

White River Narrows Archaeological District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The area is outstanding not only for rock art but also for the impressive rhyolite cliffs. The District is located entirely on lands administered by the Ely District Bureau of Land Management. When exploring the White River Narrows, be sure to watch your step. Rattlesnakes are common in this area.



## 6 White River Narrows Archaeological District

The entrance (dirt road) to White River Narrows Archaeological District is 23.0 miles from the intersection of State Route 375, State Route 318 and U.S. Route 93 (the "Y"). Traveling north on State Route 318 towards Ely, it is 4.1 miles past the "White River Narrows Archaeological District" sign and is on the right (east) side of the road. Traveling south from Ely, it is approximately 90 miles and is on the left (east) side of the road. A yellow BLM marker is just to the right of the dirt road. Go through the gate and continue 2.15 miles to the register.

**Vehicle access rating:** 3. Improved / graded dirt road

### Useful GPS Coordinates

**Entrance coordinate:** N 37° 49.198, W 115° 03.490, elevation 4412 feet

**Register coordinates:** N 37°50.059, W115° 02.365, elevation 4537 feet



# Pahranagats

## And Presidents



The Pahranagats of Lincoln County were one of several Southern Paiute groups. These people were much like other culture groups that represented a long-standing tradition (c. 12,000 years) of diverse lifeways which included hunting and gathering combined with periods of sedentism. Approximately AD 1000, a major subsistence change may have occurred when hunting was increasingly replaced by the

consumption of plants and small animals (i.e., rodents, birds, insects) as major sources of nutrition.

Horticulture became an important subsistence activity, a practice that may have been borrowed from the Virgin Anasazi, another Southwestern group present in this area along with the Fremonts. Other than this, no major disruption is inferred throughout this cultural sequence until the 19th century. At this time, native inhabitants were severely affected by the presence of European settlers in the area, particularly during the great mining boom of the 1860's. Indigenous populations were displaced, eradicated or at least greatly attenuated.

The Pahranaagats' primary political and economic unit was the mobile extended family. These small parties ranged throughout the region during the course of the seasonal round to take advantage of the varying availability of local resources. Despite the Pahranaagats' excellent survival skills, starvation was often prevalent in the spring when winter stores were depleted and spring food plants had not begun to germinate. When food

plants did become available, populations dispersed along the valley floors during the spring and summer. Seeds, roots, tubers and berries were collected and small animals were trapped and eaten. The practice of horticulture yielded crops of maize, beans, squash, pumpkins, sunflowers, lamb's quarters and winter wheat. Garden plots were situated along the margins of lower altitude lakes and marshes and were watered by irrigation ditches.

During the fall, people came together in large gatherings for the purpose of harvesting pinenuts, communal rabbits drives and mourning ceremonies. Winter was the most permanent phase of the seasonal round and was spent in villages, usually around the lower fringes of the pinyon and juniper forests (5000-8000 ft.)

Evidence of the Pahranaagats and their way of life can be found throughout Lincoln County. The network of interrelated rock art sites includes Ash Springs, Crystal Wash, Mount Irish, Rainbow Canyon, Shooting Gallery and White River Narrows.

## The Antiquities Act

One hundred years ago, President Theodore Roosevelt signed "An Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities," otherwise known as the Antiquities Act of 1906. This was the first time the United States recognized, in law, that the material remains of our past were a valuable part of our heritage.

The Antiquities Act set the stage for a comprehensive body of law and policies that became the foundation for the cultural resource management programs of federal and managing agencies. The Act created criminal sanctions for the destruction of antiquities, provided for permits to authorize study of archaeological sites, and allowed presidential designation of outstanding archaeological, historic and scientific areas as national monuments for long-term preservation.

Congress first began to consider the need to protect American antiquities in federal lands in 1882, largely in response to reports of widespread looting of pueblo ruins in the American Southwest. Many years passed, however, and much more looting was to occur, before Congress was ready to stop the destruction. Eventually, public sentiment spurred Congress to take action, culminating in passage of the Antiquities Act. Its purpose was to protect "any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity" on land owned or controlled by the Federal Government.

## Designating national monuments

In addition to protecting archaeological and historic sites, the Antiquities Act provided the President with the means of setting important places aside for special preservation and interpretation. This function of the Act has been used by Presidents throughout the 20th century to establish national monuments preserving nationally important archaeological, historic and natural areas. In all, 14 presidents — Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft, Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter and William Clinton — have established national monuments through proclamation or by approving special acts of Congress.

Prior to the Antiquities Act, specific areas had been set aside as parks or reserves. For example, Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872, and Casa Grande Ruin in Arizona was reserved from settlement and sale in 1892. But each of these parks or reservations required an act of Congress as well as Presidential approval. The Antiquities Act made the establishment of national monuments administrative actions that were quicker and far easier to execute. Section 2 of the Act gave the President the authority to proclaim national monuments, to set aside for protection "...historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States..." The first

national monument to be established under the Antiquities Act was proclaimed by President Theodore Roosevelt on September 24, 1906. It was created to protect Devil's Tower in Wyoming. Although historic interest is cited as a factor, his first proclamation created what was essentially a scientific monument.

Before President Roosevelt left office in 1909, he signed proclamations establishing 18 national monuments. Six were created primarily to preserve historic and prehistoric sites including Montezuma's Castle, Tonto ruins and Tumacacori in Arizona. Twelve were created primarily to preserve other objects of scientific interest — including Petrified Forest and Grand Canyon.

The Grand Canyon was the most remarkable of the early scientific monuments because of its enormous size. The first eleven historic and scientific monuments prior to this were relatively small, averaging a little more than 3,000 acres each. But in 1908, Roosevelt proclaimed an immense area, more than 800,000 acres in what was at that time Arizona Territory, to be the Grand Canyon National Monument. This created an important precedent in terms of the scale that was conceivable for national monuments.

## The Antiquities Act as an enforcement tool

Originally, criminal conviction under the Antiquities Act was punishable by a fine of not more than \$500, or imprisonment not to exceed 90 days, or both. In 1987, the penalties increased to a maximum fine of \$55,000 per individual, six months imprisonment, or both. These criminal provisions of the Antiquities Act were intended to protect archaeological sites but there is scant evidence that the Act had much effect on looting and vandalism. Since 1906, there have only been 18 convictions or violations of the Antiquities Act, and in 1974, the criminal provisions of the Act were effectively nullified by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which held that the term "object of antiquity" was ambiguous and the law was therefore unconstitutional. After that, a few Antiquities Act cases were prosecuted in the Tenth Circuit but in 1979, the Antiquities Act was supplanted by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act as a tool for prosecuting looters of archaeological sites.

Despite its modest record in deterring archaeological looters, the Antiquities Act has an outstanding record of preserving archaeological and historic resources through its use as the authority to create national monuments. The preservation of landscapes and the archaeological and historic resources on them is arguably the Act's most important legacy and its greatest strength as a piece of legislation. The Act also established the foundation for federal historic preservation policy and stood for 73 years as the only specific legislation to protect archaeological sites on federal lands.



Thank you for visiting Lincoln County Rock Art Sites and taking an interest in the heritage of Nevada. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the archaeologists at the Ely Field Office.

**Ely Field Office**

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**To report vandalism, call**  
(800) 242-2772 or (800) 722-3998

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