



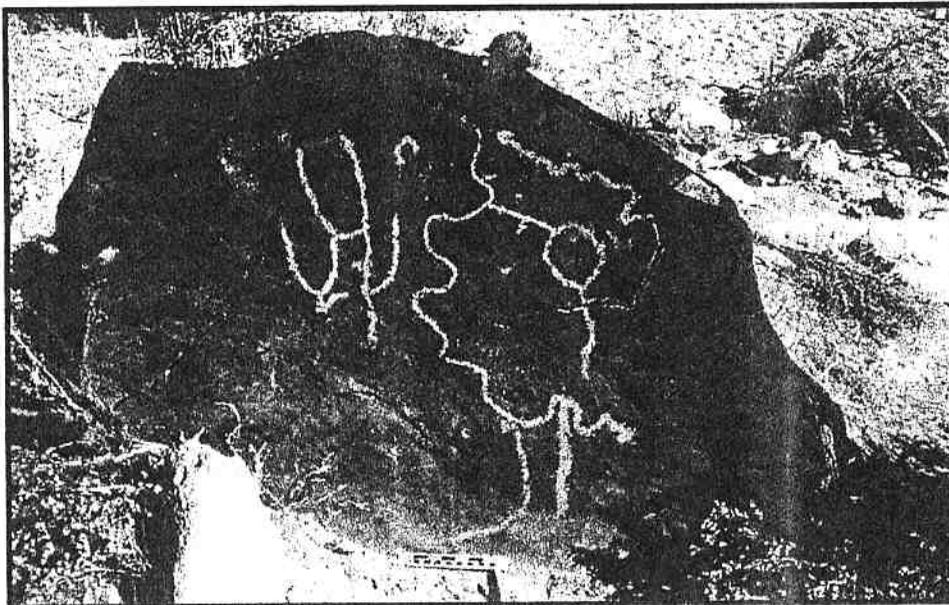
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**The Petroglyphs of Upper Fortymile Canyon,
Nevada Test Site, Nye County, Nevada**

by

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ABSTRACT

This technical report presents a study of petroglyphs in the upper Fortymile Canyon of the Nevada Test Site in southern Nevada. The fieldwork, conducted by the Desert Research Institute for the U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operations Office, included a total of 21 days during the summer and fall of 1996 and the spring of 1997. The purpose of the research was to record rock art and associated archaeological sites in conjunction with an ethnographic study of the same sites. Five sites with rock art were recorded and represent some of the most significant archaeological sites for southern Nevada. Site 26NY1 is a large campsite and contains hundreds of boulders with petroglyphs. Sites 26NY2, 26NY10131, and 26NY10132 are smaller campsites with petroglyphs on boulders, while site 26NY13, with petroglyphs on boulders and on the face of an escarpment, appears to be a special purpose locality.

A total of 2,921 elements were recorded, with 90 percent of them at site 26NY1, 5 percent at site 26NY13, 4 percent at site 26NY2, and sites 26NY10131 and 26NY10132 each have less than 1 percent. The Great Basin Abstract style accounts for 81 percent of the assemblage, Great Basin Scratched for 16 percent, Indeterminate for less than 2 percent, and Historic is less than 1 percent. The most common element is the pecked line, representing 29 percent of the assemblage, the pecked circle is 12 percent, pecked dot is 9 percent, and scratched line and pecked abstract are each about 8 percent. Spatial distribution of the different elements and styles at site 26NY1 did not reveal any significant clustering of one particular element or style. There appears to be chronological separation, however, based on superpositioning of the elements. Scratched elements over pecked ones are the most common, and there is a hint of later episodes involving both scratched and pecked techniques superimposed over earlier pecked and scratched elements.

Recommendations for the five sites with petroglyphs is that they be included in the Nevada Test Site cultural resources monitoring program to be checked on a regular basis for disturbances and that a historic district with rock art as the main theme be considered for the upper Fortymile Canyon area. Along with this designation would be additional cultural resources surveys to better define the district.