

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Great Basin Style Rock Art Thematic Resources

and/or common

2. Location

street & number various - see individual structure/site forms not for publication

city, town vicinity of congressional district 02, 01

state Utah code 049 county Beaver, Millard, Sevier code 001, 027, 041

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: grazing

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership - see individual structure/site forms

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courthouses, Sevier and Millard Counties
Bureau of Land Management, Utah State Office

street & number 136 South Temple

city, town Salt Lake City state Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes ☒ no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Great Basin is a large area of land, covering all or parts of Nevada, Utah, and California. Throughout prehistory, Great Basin cultural adaptation was characterized by a fairly mobile, hunting/gathering lifeway, although the degree of mobility or sedentism varied through time and space, according to the availability of resources. Among the distinctive items of material culture left by the prehistoric inhabitants of the Great Basin is a peculiar style of petroglyphic rock art. This style is essentially confined to the Basin, from which its name derives.

The Great Basin Style Rock Art District is a thematic nomination of selected petroglyph sites in Utah. These sites are representative of the Great Basin Style rock art found in the state. They were chosen after an intensive search of the published literature and the recorded site files. It is felt that they are the best examples of the Great Basin Style. Other sites were considered and visited, but were rejected because they were very small or very weathered, or they were not good examples of this particular style. Still other sites, although recorded, could not be relocated. In addition, other sites no doubt exist in Utah, but because they occur in isolated areas, they have not yet been recorded.

The sites listed here are eligible individually for the National Register, but by nominating them in a thematic nomination, we hope to signal the importance of the Great Basin Style as a whole to current research problems.

Great Basin Style rock art is primarily a petroglyph style, originally defined by Julian Steward (1929) and described in detail by Heizer and Baumhoff (1962). Heizer and Baumhoff identified three major and two minor styles within the overall classification. The three major styles are Great Basin Pecked, Great Basin Painted, and Great Basin Scratched. Only Great Basin Pecked has been noted in any quantity in Utah. [A fourth style, "Pit-and-Groove," is thought to be the oldest form of rock art in the Great Basin (Heizer and Baumhoff 1962:208). Consisting merely of crudely pecked pits or carved grooves, this "style" is often mistaken for natural erosion (and vice versa). Only one possible pit-and-groove example is known in Utah.]

Within the Great Basin Pecked Style are two minor styles, Great Basin Representational and Abstract. Representational elements, as the name implies, are anthropomorphs, mountain sheep and other quadrupeds, snakes, lizards, etc. The Abstract forms are further divided into two substyles: Rectilinear and Curvilinear. Rectilinear motifs are squares, rectangles, dots, zig-zags, and any other which involves a straight line. Curvilinear designs are the most distinctive and common of all the Great Basin styles. They are also very well defined (Baumhoff, Heizer and Elsasser 1958) as follows:

The circle, in one context or another, is the common element of this style but perhaps a more characteristic element is the curvilinear meander. These meanders

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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9/13/81

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

2

have a vague sort of composition in that they tend to fill an area defined by the outline of a single boulder. But aside from two restrictions -- curving lines without abrupt discontinuities and spatial restrictions provided by the areas of a single boulder face -- there seems to be no aesthetic discipline imposed on the style. The lack of discipline is no doubt attributable to the nature of the materials. Petrography is essentially a decorative art -- an attempt to embellish an object without reshaping it. But the objects that are decorated, in this case the boulders, are not themselves made by man and therefore they do not possess any degree of uniformity to provide a consistent set of restrictions within which the art might develop. The shapes of the boulders are endlessly and randomly varied so that no uniform set of artistic principles can be applied to their decoration.

Heizer and Baumhoff feel that the Abstract style is older than the Representational, and that Curvilinear is the older of the two Abstract styles. However, in no instance does one style replace the other; the Representational designs in many cases appear to be as old as the associated Curvilinear forms. That is, there is the same amount of patination on each (a relative and hardly definitive form of dating). Where such determinations can be made, however, Curvilinear designs are consistently older. The Curvilinear Style has been tentatively dated by Heizer and Baumhoff to 3500-500 B.P. and is apparently associated with the Late Archaic desert cultures.

The individual sites along with their boundaries are described in detail on the individual structure/site forms. Few of the sites were recorded as a result of systematic survey, but were usually reported by amateurs and recorded in the archeological literature by a variety of rock art specialists. The Great Basin Style rock art sites in Utah have been noted by Mallery (1893), Steward (1929), Schaafsma (1970, 1971), and Castleton (1980).

Because Great Basin Style rock art sites are usually unimpressive (no bright painting, no larger-than-life figures, and often heavy patination or weathering) and are located in unpopulated areas of the state, they are essentially free of vandalism. These sites are in excellent condition.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Prehistoric Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the Great Basin Style petroglyph sites lies in their probable antiquity, their excellent condition, and their relevance to current research problems in the Great Basin.

A. Chronology.

Through relative degrees of patination, tenuous association of art styles with excavated sites, and limited examples of superposition, Heizer and Baumhoff (1962) have dated the Curvilinear style to 3500–500 B.P. Rectilinear forms were probably introduced somewhat later, and the Representational style after that. All three styles, however, are assigned to the Desert Archaic cultures, which have been documented in the Great Basin from 8000 B.P. to the time of Numic expansion, ca. 600 B.P. Historic Numic groups (the Goshute, Ute, Paiute and Shoshone) deny making the petroglyphs, except perhaps the Great Basin Scratched which would have been done "for fun".

However, the dating of the Great Basin Pecked styles, although logical, is not absolute. It is likely that sites such as these will provide the material to develop techniques to date patination or weathering. Already obsidian hydration can date obsidian artifacts by the amount of material accumulated on them; it seems only a matter of time before such techniques are applied to rock art.

B. Design Analysis

One of the major concerns of rock art research has always been to determine what they mean. Garrick Mallery, in 1893, made an explicit attempt to understand the "picture-writing" of North American Indians. He felt, at first, that the various designs were symbolic, akin to Egyptian hieroglyphs, and that their individual meanings could be interpreted. Mallery therefore focused his study on the individual elements of the panels. In the end, however, he concluded (1893:768) that "no attempt should be made at symbolic interpretation unless the symbolic nature of the particular characters under examination is known or can be logically inferred from independent facts." No authority since has attempted to interpret the literal meaning of the rock art.

Since Mallery's work, description and the enumeration of various motifs have been emphasized in rock art studies; attempts at interpretation or explanation are few. In some cases, however, design element analysis has led to ideological interpretations. Davis (1961), for example, suggests that the Great Basin Curvilinear "horseshoe" motif, which is allegedly vulva-like, is analogous to designs used by ethnographic California Indians during girls'

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

initiation rites. Analogy of rock art designs with historic motifs can be relevant to problems of ideology, but such conclusions will always be tentative.

Major emphasis in design element analysis remains on description and classification. Design analysis is most useful in constructing typologies, determining chronology, and assigning cultural affiliation. These concerns are basic to further understanding and interpretation of the rock art.

C. Functional Analysis

Aside from chronology, one of Heizer's and Baumhoff's (1962) major concerns is to discern the function of the Great Basin rock art sites. They conduct extensive design, stylistic and locational analysis of all Great Basin Style sites in Nevada and eastern California. They look at the range, behavior and migration routes of mule deer, mountain sheep and antelope. They examine the relationship of petroglyph sites to watercourses, springs, draws, and game trails. They also note that a number of petroglyph sites are associated with prehistoric walls, blinds, and corrals. They determine that, in southern Nevada, "sites are placed at spots where animals coming to drink could be ambushed" (1962:223). However, "the people in the north ambushed or trapped animals that were on their annual migration or were simply travelling from one part of the range to another" (1962:224).

Trudy Thomas (1976) examined two petroglyph sites in Nevada in detail. She believes that the "horseshoe" motif was related specifically to hunting and that the petroglyphs themselves were an integral part of a communal hunting strategy. By mapping the location and direction of the petroglyphs, she determines that game was driven towards the draw, canyon, or hillside where the pecked boulders were situated. Hunters would attack the game from behind the boulders, killing some animals and driving the others on to the next station. "Only those faces which meet the oncoming or passing animals were carved; those faces represent the directions from which the hunters attacked" (Thomas 1976:70).

Neither functional nor design analysis has been undertaken at the Utah Great Basin Style sites. They therefore represent a reservoir of information by which Heizer's and Baumhoff's (1962) and Thomas' (1976) theories can be tested. As the descriptions of the sites indicate, some of them may have

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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9/12/84

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

3

served as hunting attack stations, but this cannot explain the abundance or location of designs at all sites (compare the GLENWOOD and DESERET sites, for example).

D. Relationships with Other Styles

As Heizer and Baumhoff (1962) note, the Great Basin Styles are not succeeded by any other. Ethnographically, the Numa did not paint or peck designs onto rocks, although they may have done so early upon their arrival in the Basin. In any case, in Nevada and eastern California, the Great Basin Styles are not overlain by other forms and do not seem to have developed into any other style.

This is not the case in Utah and extreme southeastern Nevada where Virgin Anasazi and Fremont influences combine with the Great Basin Styles. In some cases, the Anasazi or Fremont elements definitely post-date the Great Basin elements, as indicated by superposition or degree of weathering. However, occasionally these styles may combine with the Great Basin Pecked motifs to create a new, unique style. For example, according to Schaafsma (1971:90), 66% of the Curvilinear sites in Utah also contain Representational elements. These elements are figures which range from typically Great Basin stick-figures to Fremont-like solid bodied figures. In some cases, both are found. "It seem reasonable to suggest that those representative elements, scattered among Great Basin Curvilinear Style elements but showing at least partial typological resemblance to Fremont types, may eventually be found to constitute a ... Sevier Fremont stylistic manifestation" (Schaafsma 1971:91-92). Either the solid figures are later additions to the panels, or Fremont "artists" were influenced by the earlier style, or Great Basin Style "artists" were increasingly influenced by the in-coming Fremont styles.

The Western Virgin Style is also found in conjunction with Great Basin Style petroglyphs at sites in southeastern Nevada and, apparently, southwestern Utah (see MUD SPRING), as documented by Schaafsma (1971:119): "In addition to the usual spiral, dot row, and concentric circles and wavy lines appearing in most Virgin Kayenta sites, abstract designs characteristic of the Great Basin Rectilinear and Curvilinear Styles occur in panels with the representative elements and appear to be contemporary."

As Schaafsma (1971:138) clearly points out, the problem of the relationships between the various art styles is not restricted to art. It concerns all

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received 9/13/84
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4

aspects of the cultures involved. "Whether the observed influences of the Great Basin Curvilinear Style and the Fremont rock art on each other were due to simple diffusion between adjacent but differentiated cultural groups, or in fact, to a gradual adoption by hunting and gathering groups in western Utah of horticulture, pottery and associated traits of Fremont culture, is a problem yet to be clarified." The relationship of the rock art styles is relevant to the major problem of cultural continuity and change in the eastern Great Basin.

E. The Thematic Resources

Although each of the sites described below is unique and relevant in its own way to each of the research problems, their nomination as a thematic resource draws attention to the potential of Great Basin Styles generally in solving these problems. The thematic resource group, as opposed to individual nominations, emphasizes this potential more clearly.

It is not my purpose here to explore these research questions in detail in the individual site descriptions. I have not itemized the motifs nor analyzed their possible functions. Already hundreds of designs have been noted at the sites listed here, and each return visit reveals new ones. Even a detailed list of the individual motifs at each site is beyond the limits of time and personnel. However, a brief statement in the individual site descriptions indicates which of these or other research problems the site data may address.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data See individual structure/site forms

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UMT References

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See individual site summaries

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dorothy Sammons-Lohse, Archeologist

organization Utah State Historical Society date August 1981

street & number 300 Rio Grande telephone 801-533-6017

city or town Salt Lake City state Utah 84101

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☒ national ☐ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Melvin T. Smith*

title Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer date 5-11-82

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

See Continuation sheet for listing
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE

1

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- Heizer, R.F. and M.A. Baumhoff 1962 Prehistoric Rock Art of Nevada and Eastern California. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Mallery, G. 1893 Picture-Writing of the American Indian. Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Reprinted 1972, 2 volumes, Dover Publications, New York.
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1971 Rock Art of Utah. Peabody Museum Papers 65.
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Great Basin Style Rock Art Thematic Resources

State UTAH

emer 6/4/85, Stewart

Nomination/Type of Review

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION **Determined Eligible**

1. Black Rock Station Petroglyph Sites (42 MD 43, 47, 485, 593, and an isolated boulder) *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

2. Cottonwood Wash (42 MD 183) *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

3. Deseret (42 MD 55) *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION **Determined Eligible**

4. Glenwood (42 Sv 1377) *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

5. Mountain Home Wash *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

6. Mud Spring *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

7. Ryan Ranch (42 BE 618) *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

8. Site 42 MD 284 *Substantive Review* *for* Keeper

6/4/85, Yvonne D. Stewart

Attest

9. Keeper

Attest

10. Keeper

Attest