

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS (National Register Bulletin 14). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Aboriginal Rock Alignments and Effigies

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Aboriginal Rock Alignments and Effigies

C. Geographical Data

State of Wyoming

__ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 68 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.



Signature of certifying official

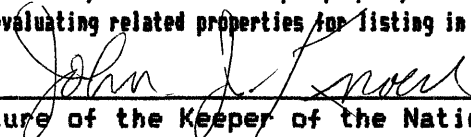
7-13-79

Date

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.



Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

9/6/89

Date

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

Among the important, if somewhat enigmatic, features of the archaeology of Wyoming and the region are cobble and boulder alignments, effigies and monuments. To the east in the Woodlands and central Plains, earthen effigy mounds and alignments also are known. There is active debate and speculation about the purpose of these rock and earthen configurations among professionals and non-professionals alike. Equivalents of the "easily explained" temple, charnel or burial mounds of the Hopewell and Mississippian culture areas do not occur in the Middle Rocky Mountains and Northwest Plains. Explanations of the known effigies and alignments range from simple or symbolic markers of trails or events to esoteric ritual or astronomical alignments. Many of these monuments may yield information significant in prehistory, and these and others are surviving monuments of Native American ethnic heritage. The full meaning of these stone monuments has been lost, but they nonetheless convey aspects of the symbolic and belief systems of the aboriginal groups which left them.

In the Northern Plains and Middle Rocky Mountains there are still dozens of surviving examples of stone figures and alignments left by the aboriginal inhabitants. The stone features under consideration are enigmatic medicine wheels, stone effigies and cairn or rock alignments. By far more numerous recognized stone features in this region are stone circles left from temporary structures. Less common, but equally pragmatic in function, are the remains of drive lines and game traps. These habitation and game procurement features are not considered in this multiple property, but are dealt with in separate multiple property contexts, Domestic Stone Circles in Wyoming, and Cooperative Game Procurement Complexes in Wyoming. In addition, aboriginal cairns and stone alignments associated with prehistoric trail systems will be dealt with in the context of Aboriginal Trails and Transportation in Wyoming. The enigmatic stone effigies and alignments discussed here generally defy pragmatic explanation, and are most often explained as commemorative or ritual in function. Many explanations have been proposed for these rock figures and alignments, including, aboriginal observatories, celestial symbols or alignments, ritual monuments, natural landmarks, vision quest sites, commemorative monuments to events or individuals, and ceremonial loci.

At present levels of documentation, few of these sites can be firmly associated with a particular aboriginal group or time period. Kehoe (1976) has suggested that many may be Protohistoric or early historic in age, based on ethnographic accounts of several monuments. Wilson (1981), in contrast, points out evidence of some antiquity and multiple components or construction phases at the Big Horn Medicine Wheel. In either case, these monuments represent important and tangible aspects of Native American ethnic heritage and aboriginal world view. Because the temporal and ethnic affinities of these features are poorly documented, the general culture history of the Northwest Plains will not be presented here. The following research themes are represented by these aboriginal monuments: 1) Native American ritual loci; 2) aboriginal commemorative monuments; and 3) Native American archaeoastronomy and cosmology. Most of these alignments, if they retain a modicum of structural and contextual integrity, have potential social and scientific significance and should be considered for enrollment on the National Register, whether or not we can currently explain them or determine their ages. Each is a unique surviving monument of a past culture and a tangible manifestation of a fast disappearing cultural legacy.

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Historic Contexts, continued

Native American Ritual Loci

Some historic and ethnographic sources provide descriptions of the use of stone monuments in association with aboriginal rituals. Kehoe (1976) has documented several cases of oral traditions associated with specific monuments. It remains difficult to document whether these traditions document the 'true' origin of the monuments, or amount to ritualized explanations of pre-existing monuments encountered by these groups. In either case, the surviving traditions are traditional cultural values associated with surviving aboriginal monuments. Few of the surviving effigies, monuments or alignments in Wyoming have had such native traditions specifically associated with them, but such associations from other areas provide useful analogies for evaluating or offering possible explanations of Wyoming examples. Most of the historically recorded traditions of the Big Horn Medicine Wheel acknowledge this monument as existing before the cultural group in question came to this region. In this respect, the Medicine Wheel must be recognized as a complex traditional cultural value within several possible contexts. This is probably also true of other, less well documented monuments within the State.

Native American ritual loci can be classified within three potentially overlapping classes: 1) vision quest loci; 2) communal ceremonial loci; and 3) mythical or legendary features. In principle, each of these classes of ritual loci represents different aspects of traditional ceremonial and belief systems, but in practice the archaeological manifestations may not be particularly discrete or distinguishable, and a given locus may potentially involve all three classes. As an illustration, the popularly well known Big Horn Medicine Wheel has historically been a popular vision quest locus among Native American groups, has also commonly been used as a ritually significant location for communal and private ceremonies, and the location, the Medicine Wheel itself, and some nearby or associated caves are important elements in several Native American myths and legends. Even though it is recognized that these rituals may use the same physical location, a brief discussion of the historic or ethnographic characteristics of each context will be presented separately.

Vision Quest Loci

A common and universally important element in Native American cultural traditions is the vision quest. Details of the associated rituals vary among regions and among distinct traditions within a given region. The goal of a vision quest rite, whether individual or communal, was communication with a numinous power pervading all nature, or a personal guardian spirit. Historically, the guardian spirit was not particularly characteristic of the cultures of the Northwest Plains, but cannot be discounted as a possibility for earlier cultural groups. Among historic Plains Equestrian cultures, the vision quest was not a personal rite of passage or an individual shamanic ritual, but a pervasive element of communal life (cf Dugan 1985: 1-3, 16). Vision quest rites were a common response to compelling or challenging situations in which

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the supplicants sought inspiration, guidance, courage, healing power or other forms of individual power to benefit their community. In other cultural traditions, the vision quest was often used as a means to seek personal power or social status.

Typically, within the Plains Equestrian traditions, the supplicant in a vision quest would purify himself (this being almost universally a male rite) spiritually in a sweat lodge and then go to a high and isolated spot to seek vision or inspiration (cf. Dugan 1985: 143; Benedict 1985: 2). It was considered important that the vision quest location be away from ordinary traffic and distractions, and that the supplicant abstain from food or drink to maintain clarity of perception. Tobacco, cedar bark or some other smoking material was sometimes used to enhance that clarity, especially among groups which viewed smoke as a pathway to the spirit world. Locations of power were often traditional, and might be used repeatedly over many generations or millennia (Benedict 1985: 3). Although symbolic figures, such as 'medicine wheels' might be associated with these locations, either as part of the vision quest or for incidental reasons, it was more common for these loci to be kept clean of vegetation or any artifacts not directly associated with the vision quest. Power objects might include smoking paraphernalia or the idiosyncratic elements of personal medicine bundles. Ethnographic accounts would suggest that the archaeological identification of personal medicine items is problematic.

Historically traditional vision quest sites, such as Old Man Mountain in Colorado (Benedict 1985), might have no directly associated artifacts or features. Other possible vision quest sites, such as the Bear Creek Ranch Medicine Wheel, might be associated with small, symbolic stone figures. But these examples share the common elements of high, deserted locations, remote from secular influence, in rugged and lonely, yet accessible settings, near major rivers, and having commanding views in all, or most, directions. Such sites are likely to be significant as the locations of multiple episodes of deeply significant aboriginal activity. At the same time, the nature of the vision quest rite makes it probable that these loci will have few associated features or artifacts. Those sites which are associated with ritual stone figures are more readily visible and identifiable to the contemporary investigator, and more amenable to public interpretation, but no more significant than empirically subtle vision quest loci.

The most commonly reported aboriginal stone alignments and identified as probable vision quest loci, consist of a small, isolated stone circle in a hilltop, butte or high saddle setting. These stone circles have been reported as small, about one to two meters in diameter, and impoverished in associated materials. Often, no actual measurement of size is given, only the subjective description 'small,' or no size information at all. The interpretation of a vision quest loci is commonly based on a high, isolated location "unsuitable for a campsite," and on a paucity of associated materials. Other aspects of 'classic' historic or ethnographic analogies are rarely addressed. It is possible that many of these sites, on the basis of more detailed evaluation, should be classified simply as isolated stone circle sites, and represent temporary single dwelling encampments.

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Another type of vision quest site would consist of a 'medicine wheel' or other symbolic rock alignment in a similar, high, isolated setting. This could be dominated by a small to moderate sized medicine wheel, effigy or cairn associated with several individual vision quests, or a larger and more complex figure which also functioned as a communal ceremonial locus, astronomical alignment or commemorative monument. In archaeological classification, a larger, more complex figure would be identified with its larger ritual or communal function, and the possibility of use as a vision quest locus would be acknowledged as secondary. The small cairns or alignments associated with individual vision quests would tend to be similar to the small, isolated stone circle sites. The identification of these vision quest loci would be strengthened by the association of stone or ceramic pipe fragments or other smoking paraphernalia. Ethnographic analogies are available for small monuments or rock figures at vision quest sites. It was common for cairns of stone, antlers or skulls to be started at ritually significant locations, and each new supplicant at that location would add an item to the cairn. In some cultures, these ritually significant locations included major river crossings, crossroads and high passes, and early Euroamerican travelers commented on massive cairns in many of these locations. Another custom involved the vision quest supplicant arranging a small circle of stones or other objects, and lines radiating out in ritually significant directions, then sitting within the circle to await a vision. This latter pattern may account for some of the known small, isolated stone circles and small medicine wheels.

Communal Ceremonial Loci

The second class of ritual loci includes a variety of communal ceremonial loci. This class is not as easily defined as vision quest loci, because the nature and characteristics of communal ceremonies were much more varied than vision quests. Like the traditional vision quest site, many of these communal ritual loci may have been traditional over extended periods of time and marked by stone circles, medicine wheels, or other stone monuments. Others may have been associated with little in the way of visible physical remains. The circle was a common and powerful symbol in many Native American cultures, and many communal rituals or ceremonies, including various dances, were staged within ritually defined circles. Storm (1972) describes the 'traditional' Sun Dance 'lodge' as defined by a circle of stones with a forked pole in the center and lines of stones radiating out from the pole to the perimeter. Various symbolic objects, including a buffalo skull are described as associated with the central pole. Within the discussion Storm asserts that the medicine wheel was the master symbol of Northern Cheyenne cosmology. Although there has been some heated debate over how authentic Storm's account might be for the Northern Cheyenne, and outright denouncement by the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council, the patterns which are described contain recognizable elements of several historically and ethnographically described cultures in this region. It is worth taking note of Wilson's (1981: 346-347) caution that the terms wheel or circle are unfortunate and problematic, as archaeological examples rarely display radial symmetry, and may well involve other kinds of

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symbols or effigies. The dance circle, in various forms remains an important element of modern Native American ceremonies. It is likely that some of the large stone circles reported from the Northwest Plains, both in isolated locations and within larger stone circle sites, are the remains of communal ceremonial loci. Developing criteria for determining whether certain large stone circles were ceremonial or more secular in function is a potentially rewarding research topic within this context.

Mythical or Legendary Features

A common characteristic of historically and ethnographically known Native American cultures was to identify natural features of the landscape with important legendary or mythical events. Sometimes these were visually unique or prominent natural features recognized by everyone, but not visited or modified in any way. In other cases, the features have been visited for cyclic or occasional ceremonies, and evidence of offerings or ceremonial features might be found there. A symbolic or representational rock alignment or effigy might be constructed to commemorate the legendary or mythical event, or as a focal point for ritual. In some cases, these loci, because of their mythical associations, would be preferred loci for certain communal ceremonies and for individual vision quests. Thus, some ritual loci may incorporate all the classes or elements discussed here, and others might be definable within a given class. "Any single site could have been used in several different ways; and the historical documentation [or tradition] of one such use does not exclude others, nor does it prove that the site was constructed originally for the documented purpose" (Wilson 1981: 336).

Aboriginal Commemorative Monuments

There are historic traditions of monuments and effigies constructed in commemoration of specific historic persons or events. Over extended periods of time the distinctions among actual historical events, legends and myths may well become blurred. Working from an archaeological perspective, unless the monument in question is an identifiable tomb, the distinction between a monument to an actual person or event, and a ritual or ceremonial monument may be of little significance. In addition, existing monuments are often 'adopted' by new groups moving into an area and incorporated into their own rituals and symbol systems with little or no regard for the original meaning of the construction. Stone monuments need to be recognized as multi-faceted phenomena, both prehistorically and historically, with various meanings and functions.

Kehoe (1976) discusses several aboriginal cobble and boulder monuments in Saskatchewan which, according to Native American informants were historic monuments to actual or near legendary events. Construction of the monuments was attributed to named historic or semi-legendary persons, and the locations and monuments were associated with specific persons and events. However, these oral traditions could either record the actual construction of the stone monuments, or later dramatic interpretations of existing monuments. Such

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monuments recognized by existing cultural traditions are elements of traditional cultural values, and it becomes academic whether the event commemorated was actual or legendary, and whether the event occurred at the location of the monument.

'Medicine wheels' are mentioned as a form of monument as are various kinds of effigies. Thus, commemorative monuments may include a variety of the property types encompassed by rock alignments and effigies. A so-called medicine wheel might mark the location of the death lodge of a renowned and powerful leader, or might symbolically commemorate a significant event. Similarly, a person or event might be commemorated by an 'arrow' or effigy with symbolic association. An arrow or alignment might have indicated a direction of movement or a geographic or celestial association with the event. Kehoe (1976) recounts an example of an effigy and alignment complex incorporating several human effigies and rock lines associated with the oral tradition of a specific skirmish. According to the tradition, the human effigies represented the actual locations and orientations where named individuals died, while the rock lines represented significant directions and distances of movement during the conflict. Other effigy sites for which there are recorded traditions involve much more abstract symbols or associations with the events or persons commemorated.

Cosmology and Archaeoastronomy

Another class of explanation which has been offered for cobble and boulder monuments, effigies and alignments involves various celestial alignments, astronomical observation points and astronomical symbols. One popular explanation, and more easily observed celestial phenomena, involves orientation to solstitial and equinoctial sunrises. Numerous other solar, lunar and sidereal alignments have also been used in an attempt to explain the shapes and orientations of various stone alignments. Eddy (1976) has presented an extensive and detailed discussion of how many of the known aboriginal stone alignments may be aligned with solar or celestial phenomena, while acknowledging that many may also be depictions of mythical or legendary figures.

In discussing these kinds of correlations, the investigator must keep in mind that celestial orientations have changed through time, and intriguing correlations of alignments which exist today may not have existed at the time the stone alignment was constructed. If an argument for a specific alignment is to be made for a given stone monument, it is preferable if the period of construction can be established, and the alignment be verified within that time period, and some corroborating evidence can be found that the celestial phenomena in question was of some significance to the associated cultural group.

The distinction between an astronomical alignment and an observatory in an aboriginal context may be subtle or insignificant. Few arguments can be made for full-time holy men, astrologers or astronomers within the hunting and foraging cultures documented for this region. Those monuments which were associated with specific celestial phenomena were probably associated with

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seasonal or cyclic ceremonies, and would have been observatories primarily in the sense that the associated alignment or phenomenon was observed during the ceremony.

The question of rock figures representing astronomical symbols is more easily addressed in other regions where iconography survives in a greater variety of forms. This region was not characterized by iconographic depictions in ceramics or textiles, or in any other portable form which has survived in quantities adequate for current comparative investigation. Some comparative materials are available in painted lodge covers, shields, winter counts, beadwork and other items in museum collections. The greatest potential source for comparison on the Northwest Plains lies in surviving rock art panels. At present little systematic or comparative work has been done on the rock art of the region. Parallels can be found between rock art figures and figures depicted by rock alignments, among them the so-called arrows and medicine wheels, and several more representational figures. However, there is little basis at present for judging whether any of these figures may or may not be astronomical symbols. Analogies with other cultural areas would indicate that such symbolism is a real possibility worthy of serious investigation.

Summary

Several possible functional classes for various ritual, ceremonial or commemorative rock alignments and effigies in Wyoming have been presented. These are not mutually exclusive possibilities, and any given rock alignment might contain elements of all these functional classes, as well as more pragmatic functions such as trail or territorial markers. It has been suggested that domestic stone circles and rock alignments associated with communal game procurement complexes are distinguishable as discrete and distinct entities. These rock alignments and effigies functioned as 1) individual or communal ritual loci, which might have included natural or cultural features associated with myths or legends, 2) as commemorative monuments to special persons or events, and 3) as astronomical symbols or alignments. These functions relate to important aspects of the cosmology and symbol systems of Native American cultures, and as such have social significance in their ethnic heritage. Any of these monuments may have been functionally shared by coexisting ethnic groups, and may have been used in one or more ways during successive cultural periods. It is unlikely that any of these monuments had a single, cohesive function and period of use. Most were probably multi-episodal and multi-functional.

Cross-cutting the three functional classes presented above are five property types based on physical attributes. These property types are based on current conventional field classifications, and may not relate to the emic forms or symbols which they represent. These property types, which will be discussed in the following section, are: A) medicine wheels; B) arrows; C) effigies; D) non-domestic stone circles; and E) geometric and linear alignments. A given rock alignment site may include a mixture of these property types, or may fall ambiguously between two property types. The Green Mountain

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Arrow (48FR96), which was enrolled on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986, for example, has been described both as an arrow and as a human effigy. The Big Horn Medicine Wheel (48BH302), enrolled in 1969 and generally recognized as a classic example of a medicine wheel, might also be a turtle effigy (cf. Wilson 1981: 346-348). Medicine wheels are sometimes included within discussions of stone circles, and Kehoe (1976) has suggested, based on the accounts of Native American informants, that domestic stone circles were sometimes augmented to become medicine wheels as a monument to the death lodge of an honored person. Interpretation of these enigmatic rock alignments is often problematic or evasive. Nonetheless they are potentially significant monuments to broad cultural patterns and Native American heritage. Their significance is both social and scientific, and they can be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria a, c and d (36 CFR 60.6).

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type: A. Medicine Wheels

II. Description

There is some variation in the rock figures included in the term 'medicine wheel,' but the common characteristics include a roughly central round (usually not circular) figure or large cairn, with alignments of stones radiating out from this focal figure. The radiating lines may be inside or outside the focal figure, or both, and their may be several nested or concentric figures, and several ancillary figures or cairns. Size varies widely from a few feet across to over a hundred feet across, particularly if the full extent of all radiating lines is included. Wyoming examples range from the Bear Creek Ranch Medicine Wheel (48BH48), with a central figure 2.5 meters (ca. 7.2 feet) across, and a longest overall extent of (continued)

III. Significance

Medicine wheel rock alignments are tangible manifestations of Native American ethnic heritage, and as such have both social and scientific significance. These stone monuments may represent the broad cultural patterns and belief systems of aboriginal cultural groups in several ways, and may yield information important in prehistory. As monuments to venerated persons or events, or as the loci of individual or communal rituals, these sites would be associated with events or broad cultural patterns which made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of cultural development (36 CFR 60.6 a). As architectural monuments, they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity (36 CFR 60.6 c). And as manifestations of symbolic and cosmological values, they may be likely to yield information important in prehistory (36 CFR 60.6 d). In current, largely subsistence based research orientations, it may prove complex and difficult to recover or (continued)

IV. Registration Requirements

A fundamental factor to consider in the evaluation of the eligibility of a medicine wheel structure is whether its antiquity and integrity can be demonstrated. Old-timers in northern Wyoming delight in recalling the story of a 'medicine wheel' constructed by a group of youths earlier in this century, and later recommended for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by several well-meaning archaeologists. In this particular case, a few of the original builders came forward, indicated that they had participated in the making of the figure and demonstrated physical evidence of the recent age of the figure. Other cases of historic 'fakes' or 'copies' might not be so easily revealed. Important evidence to look for would be the incorporation of the constituent stones into the soil surface and relative weathering of the upper and lower surfaces of those stones. Loose stones might represent natural displacement or later human modification, or might simply be unrelated to the figure. Careful excavation might also reveal direct association with cultural materials, or relationship to depositional layers or soil horizons. If the antiquity of the figure can be demonstrated, and it retains sufficient integrity to convey its basic pattern, orientation and setting, it should then be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under all applicable criteria.

X See continuation sheet

X See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

This multiple property group is based on reported cobble and boulder alignments and effigies. These properties are infrequently reported, but generate more than their share of interest and speculation. There has been no common context or set of criteria by which to evaluate these enigmatic figures, and investigators have expressed widely differing views of significance and research potential. Some figures, like the Big Horn Medicine Wheel and the Great Arrow near Meeteetse have stimulated comment by travelers and adventurers, and amateur and professional theories. Others, like the Bowman Effigies have remained quietly obscure. Although there are Native American traditions regarding the historic use of some of these sites, we have no traditions regarding their origins. Proper evaluation of these ritual and commemorative sites will require additional detailed studies and comparison with similar monuments in adjacent regions. Comparable figures on the Northern Plains have been identified as commemorative monuments, celestial alignments, calendrical devices and ritual localities. This multiple property documentation form reviews the most relevant historic contexts, outlines definitions of the known property types, and presents precautions and criteria for the evaluation of these property types. Identifications are based on gross attributes and conventional field identification. Common problems with field identifications and probable interpretations are discussed.

 See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

Benedict, James B.

1985 Old Man Mountain: A Vision Quest Site in the Colorado High Country. Research Report Number 4, Center for Mountain Archaeology, Ward, Colorado.

Dugan, Kathleen Margaret

1985 The Vision Quest of the Plains: Its Spiritual Significance. Studies in American Religion, Volume 13. Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Eddy, John A.

1977 Medicine Wheels and Plains Indian Astronomy. In Native American Astronomy, edited by Anthony F. Aveni, pp. 147-169. Austin: University of Texas Press.

 X See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

<u> X </u> State Historic Preservation Office	<u> </u> local government
<u> </u> other State agency	<u> </u> University
<u> </u> Federal agency	<u> </u> other

Specify repository: SHPO Cultural Records, Laramie

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Property Types, continued

II. Description (continued)

5.8 meters (ca. 19 feet), to the Big Horn Medicine Wheel (48BH302), which has a long axis spanning approximately 27.5 meters (ca. 90 feet). The Big Horn Medicine Wheel is a popular example, but by no means typical this property type. The Big Horn Medicine Wheel has an interior cairn or rubble heap, a rounded perimeter, and 28 'spokes' radiating from the interior cairn to the perimeter. This general rim, hub and spokes configuration is largely responsible for the term medicine wheel. Many other examples require a much more strenuous stretch of the imagination to visualize a wheel. Interpretations of medicine wheel structures have been varied and complex, and have addressed all the historic contexts discussed within this multiple property documentation.

III. Significance (continued)

evaluate the important information which these sites may yield. Much of the information may be contained within poorly documented symbolism or in obscure or complex celestial orientations. In addition, many of these locations may represent multiple uses and multiple episodes of use by several culturally divergent groups. For example, investigations of the Big Horn Medicine Wheel have indicated that: 1) there are at least two widely separated construction stages evident; 2) the main figure main incorporate several significant celestial alignments; 3) the site and nearby natural features are incorporated into several Native American myths and legends; 4) the site has historically been an important location for communal ceremonies and individual vision quests; 5) some oral traditions suggest the site had been an ancient monument before their people came to the region; and 6) the figure may incorporate one or more ritually significant symbols (cf Wilson 1975 and 1981; Eddy 1974). There is no reason to assume, without evidence to the contrary, that any medicine wheel site has simpler ritual associations or a less involved history of construction and use.

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I. Name of Property Type: B. Arrows

II. Description:

Stone arrows have been reported as various forms of linear rock alignments with triangles or divergent rays suggesting fletching at the proximal end and a cairn or triangular outline at the distal end. They resemble Euroamerican conventionalizations of arrows, but may have represented different concepts among the aboriginal inhabitants. Examples known by the author range from one near Polecat Bench in Park County, formed at tip and base by wide, squat chevrons and about 1.5 meters (ca. 5 feet) in length, to the Green Mountain Arrow (48FR96) at nearly 50 meters (165 feet). There has been a popular tradition to claim that each of these arrows points to the Big Horn Medicine Wheel, but in every case in which an actual orientation has been measured, the 'arrow' has been found to point in a different direction. Although situations of these figures vary from low colluvial fans to high ridge tops, few are in situations which would be useful or suitable for directional arrows related to travel. Whether any of these alignments related to significant celestial orientations during the period of its construction or subsequent use awaits detailed scientific studies. Most of the figures identified as arrows are probably symbolic or representational effigies, and not stylized arrows or directional indicators. Stone arrow alignments may have significance as celestial symbols or alignments, and may function as ritual loci. It has also been argued that some may be commemorative monuments to prominent persons or events. It may never be possible to arrive at satisfactory or conclusive explanations, but these are nonetheless significant monuments to past cultural patterns.

III. Significance:

Stone arrows, like medicine wheels, are tangible monuments to Native American ethnic heritage, and have both social and scientific significance. These stone monuments are manifestations of symbolic systems and broad cultural patterns of aboriginal cultural groups and may be evaluated in several different ways. As monuments to venerated persons or events, or as the loci of individual or communal rituals, these sites would be associated with events or broad cultural patterns which made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of cultural development (36 CFR 60.6 a). As architectural monuments, they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity (36 CFR 60.6 c). And as manifestations of symbolic and cosmological values, they may be likely to yield information important in prehistory (36 CFR 60.6 d). Stone arrows, like medicine wheels, are tangible monuments to Native American ethnic heritage, and have both social and scientific significance. These stone monuments may represent the broad cultural patterns and belief systems of aboriginal cultural groups in several ways, and may yield information important in prehistory. As monuments to venerated persons or events, or as the loci of individual or communal rituals, these sites would be

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associated with events or broad cultural patterns which made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of cultural development (36 CFR 60.6 a). As architectural monuments, they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity (36 CFR 60.6 c). And as manifestations of symbolic and cosmological values, they may be likely to yield information important in pre-history (36 CFR 60.6 d). It should always be considered that these alignments are astronomical, symbolic or commemorative, and much of their significance may relate to poorly documented symbolic systems or obscure and complex celestial orientations. These locations and monuments may also have multiple uses, multiple episodes, and more than a single aboriginal culture.

IV. Registration Requirements:

Stone arrows like medicine wheels are unique and important monuments to Native American ethnic heritage, and many may yield information important in prehistory. Therefore, the fundamental requirements for registration on the National Register of Historic Places are that the monuments are of demonstrable antiquity and that they retain "integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association" (36 CFR 60.6). Antiquity, although not necessarily absolute age, could be determined in the same ways as those discussed for medicine wheels. Key aspects of establishing integrity would be that a major proportion of the stones defining the figure are in situ, and that the location retains sufficient natural integrity to convey an impression of the aboriginal setting and feeling. Thus, substantial disturbance to the figure or its immediate context would detract from its integrity, but a small proportion of stones for which the original location could not be verified might not adversely effect the integrity. In addition, any clear association of all or part of the figure with a definite aboriginal ethnic group or cultural period would greatly strengthen the significance of that figure. Thus, the key attributes contributing to significance would be clear indications of age and association with one or more meaningful cultural entities.

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Section Number F Page C-1 Rock Alignments and Effigies in Wyoming

I. Name of Property Type: C. Effigy Figures

II. Description:

Cobble and boulder effigy figures constitute a broad property type which includes all rock alignments and configurations which appear to represent or be effigies of a symbolic or natural entity. Few examples of this property type have been reported in Wyoming, although they are known widely on the Northern Plains. The Bowman Effigies site (48PL195) contains two life-size human figures made up of large cobbles, and there are unconfirmed reports of two other effigy sites farther west along the same drainage. Wilson (1981: 346-347) has suggested that the Big Horn Medicine Wheel may be a turtle effigy, and a similar interpretation has been offered for a wheel-like effigy in Saskatchewan (Kehoe and Kehoe 1979). The effigy mounds of the Eastern Woodlands depict serpents, thunderbirds, bears and other animals, and more extensive investigations of Wyoming rock effigies may disclose comparable depictions. These effigies relate to all the historic contexts discussed within this multiple property documentation.

III. Significance:

Stone effigies are representations of natural or mythical entities occurring alone or in combination. They may have functioned as commemorative monuments to actual or legendary events, or as ritual loci. As such, they are significant as tangible monuments to the belief systems and values of aboriginal cultural groups. The effigy figures in a commemorative monument might mark the actual location of a significant event, or might depict an event venerated by the cultural group or some significant event in the life of an honored individual. A monument might also be symbolic, utilizing a mythical or symbolic figure associated with a significant person or event. A ritual location might also contain a mythical or symbolic figure associated with the significance of the location. Depending on the associations of the figure, celestial orientations might also be present. These aboriginal stone monuments are likely to be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to aboriginal cultural development (36 CFR 60.0 a), embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction (36 CFR 60.6 c), and may be likely to yield information important in prehistory (36 CFR 60.6 d).

IV. Registration Requirements:

The major attributes to consider in evaluating the significance of a cobble or boulder effigy are its antiquity and its integrity. As with arrows and medicine wheels, the relationship of the constituent stones to aggradation of soil matrix and soil formation needs to be considered as an indication of the period of time the stones have been in place. This can serve both as an indication of antiquity and as a confirmation of integrity of distribution of the constituent stones. Another indication of minimal disturbance of the

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stones over an extended period of time might be more extensive weathering of the upper surface in comparison to the lower surface. Clear association with a chronological or cultural marker might serve to establish the actual context of all or part of the figure, but the evaluation of age and association should be as thorough as possible. Because commemorative and ritual locations represent multiple episodes and multiple uses, integrity and sequential components should be carefully considered. Integrity involves both integrity of the aboriginal patterns of the alignments and integrity of the setting or context. Because stone effigies are unique aboriginal monuments representing important ritual or commemorative activities, demonstration of their antiquity and integrity are sufficient to demonstrate their significance. If they can also be associated with a specific event or important cultural pattern, or it can be shown that they may yield additional information important in prehistory, this merely adds to their significance.

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I. Name of Property: D. Non-domestic Stone Circles

II. Description:

Non-domestic stone circles are stone circles which fall outside the accepted range of domestic stone circles, or tipi rings, and lack the ancillary features which would place them within the category of medicine wheels. Stone circles which are most often identified as non-domestic or ceremonial are larger or smaller than is considered acceptable for a domestic structure and situated in an isolated or inhospitable location. Judgements, based on a variety of assumptions and analogies, of the acceptable diameters of domestic circles range from two to nine meters, with many investigators preferring to base their judgement on location and associations. Stone circles occurring in groups are almost universally accepted as domestic, with a subjective lower limit of about 1.5 meters in diameter. Association with artifacts, hearth remnants or subsistence debris is generally considered firm confirmation of domestic function. The residual category of non-domestic stone circles then includes circles less than two meters in diameter, particularly if they are in high, isolated or 'unattractive' situations, and unusually large circles, more than nine meters (ca. 30 feet) in diameter. Smaller stone circles are interpreted as locations of individual ritual activities such as vision quests or shamanistic activity, while larger circles are most often interpreted as communal ceremonial loci such as dance circles or council circles. Investigators have acknowledged the possibility of large communal ceremonial circles within large domestic stone circle sites, but, as yet, there are no well documented examples in Wyoming. As presently documented and interpreted, non-domestic stone circles relate entirely to the historic context of Native American ritual loci.

III. Significance:

The majority of non-domestic stone circles represent individual or group ritual loci, and represent significant aspects of Native American ethnic heritage. Many aboriginal societies considered high, barren locations to be closer to numinous beings and sources of power, and these locations were favored for many rites and ceremonies. Most commonly these were the locations of individual or group rites of supplication, such as vision quests and thirst dances. Supplication was often performed within a ritual circle of stones, and the location is identifiable by the presence of an isolated, non-domestic stone circle. Some significant group ceremonies and rituals also occurred in stone circles near or within campsites. These circles tended to be physically set apart from the domestic loci, and would often consist of larger circles than those associated with the habitations. Such ceremonial circles might be associated with fragments of ritual paraphernalia, but would not tend to contain domestic or subsistence debris. These structures would primarily be associated with broad cultural patterns which were significant to the patterns of aboriginal cultural development (36 CFR 60.6 a). They might also be likely to yield information important in prehistory (36 CFR 60.6 d). The majority of

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these properties would be Native American ritual loci, and would not be strongly associated with the other historical contexts discussed above.

IV. Registration Requirements:

The significance of a non-domestic stone circle would depend on its age, integrity and cultural affiliation. Some clear indication, either from its setting or from associated ritual items, of non-domestic function would also be necessary. A ritual or ceremonial circle directly associated with a campsite might contribute to the significance of that campsite, but would probably not be significant by itself. The significance of an isolated non-domestic stone circle would depend on the same criteria of antiquity and integrity discussed for medicine wheels, arrows and effigies. In addition, ritual association must be demonstrated. The discussion above pointed out that for vision quest loci, setting and lack of domestic debris can indicate the ritual function of the locus, and that such an interpretation might be reinforced by the presence of ritual materials such as smoking paraphernalia. Stone circles associated with group rituals might be more difficult to justify, and would need to be related to specific historic or ethnographic analogies. This property type as a whole represents significant broad cultural patterns, but individual sites may lack distinction. It is particularly important to consider the significance of individual properties as they relate to the known body of ceremonial stone circles, and designate representative examples which retain integrity of setting and association.

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I. Name of Property Type: E. Geometric or Linear Alignments

II. Description:

Many geometric and linear rock alignments and cairn lines have been reported from throughout Wyoming. Many of the linear alignments around the southern Bighorn Mountains may relate to a system of aboriginal trails, but no comprehensive study of this alleged trail system has been undertaken. This possible function must be considered for linear rock alignments in other areas as well. Other linear rock or cairn alignments are related to game drive complexes, and can be evaluated within the context of cooperative game procurement complexes. Other geometric and linear rock alignments remain enigmatic. They are often located on high ridges or bluffs which would be unsuitable as trail routes or game drives. Ritual or celestial alignments are possibilities to be considered, but must be demonstrated on a case by case basis. If these cases are to be considered effigies, they have either lost key elements or represent highly simplified abstractions. The investigator must be careful to eliminate an historic function for these alignments. One common historic pattern in this region which could have left such features was the use of cobbles or slabs to stabilize fenceposts or telegraph poles. With the removal or disintegration of the wooden uprights, these historic features would appear to be cairn lines. With these limitations in mind, geometric and linear rock alignments may have functioned within any of the historic contexts discussed within this multiple property group, or may have had a more pragmatic function, such as marking trails, drivelines or territorial boundaries.

III. Significance:

Linear and geometric stone alignments which do not have a demonstrable practical function, such as drivelines or trail markers, may have been commemorative monuments or ritual alignments. The significance of these monuments is similar to medicine wheels, arrows and effigies. Because these alignments are abstract, their alignment, symbolism or representation may be obscure and difficult to interpret. These stone alignments should be viewed as monuments to Native American ethnic heritage, and their potential to yield information important in prehistory should not be easily discounted.

IV. Registration Requirements:

As a property type, linear and geometric stone alignments are difficult to evaluate for significance. To consider the significance of these properties, it must first be demonstrated that they are clearly cultural phenomena, that they are aboriginal in origin and that they retain integrity of setting and association. In many of the natural settings of Wyoming, linear and geometric alignments of cobbles and boulders occur naturally, and can be mistaken for cultural artifacts. While age and integrity can be demonstrated in much the same way as the other types of alignments, a stronger argument may

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need to be made for the cultural origin of these properties. Unless clear cultural association can be demonstrated, many of these properties are of dubious significance.

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