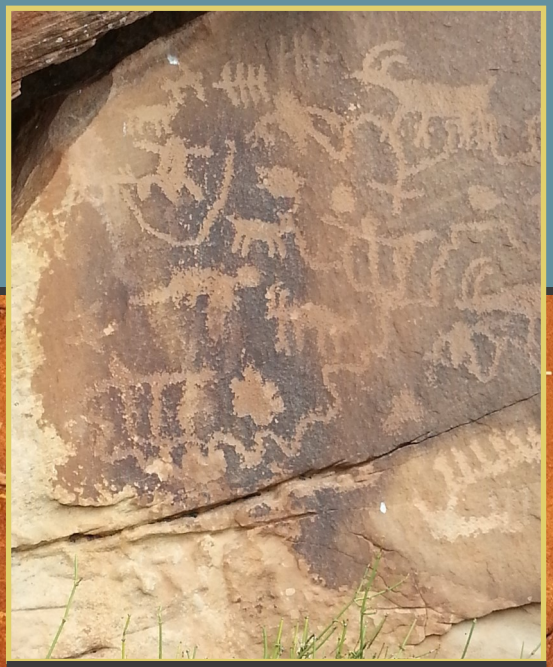

ONE HUNDRED & FIFTY MILLION YEARS OF HISTORY

The Rimrocks of Western Montrose County are rich with history. One hundred and fifty million years ago, this landscape included dinosaurs and lush plants that were eventually deposited in sandstone beds that now define the Morrison Formation. Its massive rock outcroppings of red and gray sandstone provided an excellent medium for the early inhabitants of this area to tell their stories.

These rock etchings, although their content may seem primitive and unfamiliar, beckon us to search for the common themes that connect all of humanity throughout the ages. In doing so, we can understand the powerful human need to define our place and purpose on this earth, and to ensure that our lives do not go un-remembered.

RIMROCKER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Of Western Montrose County

Promoting Awareness, Understanding, Appreciation, and Preservation of our area's Past & Present.

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PARADOX VALLEY PETROGLYPH TOUR

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Other area tours you may enjoy: Highway 141 auto tour, Paradox Valley & Dolores River Canyon offers hiking and driving routes, Hanging Flume Tour, Long Park Mine auto tour, Wild Horses of Disappointment Valley,

Petroglyph comes from 2 Greek words: *petro* - rock, and *glyph*-carving or engraving. They are created by pecking or grinding away the dark surface area of a rock to expose the lighter color underneath. This dark coating is referred to as *desert varnish*—a thin layer of minerals and bacteria that have been cemented to the rock's surface.

Researchers have long puzzled over the meanings of these petroglyphs. Unlike Hieroglyphics, these symbols do not stand for a word, but neither are they simply doodles or graffiti. Each etching appears to be part of a greater story that may be a record of events, a way to monitor natural phenomena, to give directions, to boast of a hunting achievement, or an attempt to portray the supernatural.

Petroglyphs are historical treasures to be viewed with respect. Please do not touch, apply anything to them, make rubbings, or leave any trace of your visit other than your soft foot prints on the earth, and take only photographs, and your memories away with you.

Enjoy Your Visit

The Tour will involve driving on 2-track dirt roads that require a high clearance vehicle. The roads can be very slick in wet weather. You will also do some hiking and rock scrambling. Dress appropriately and carry enough water.

Although the petroglyphs are on public land, you will approach them through private land. Please respect this granted access. Stay only on the roads and leave all gates as you found them.

You will visit 4 sites within a 4 mile stretch of Highway 90. This area is being studied as an *Area of Critical Environmental Concern* due to its cultural-historic value as a concentration of numerous Ancestral Pueblo sites. These people, more commonly known as Anasazi, lived here during the late Basket maker/pre-Hopi period, in perhaps the narrow time-frame from 900 to 1300 AD.

Hunting Magic Panel

Leaving Naturita, west on Highway 141, turn onto Highway 90 heading west for about 5 miles to mile marker 29. Turn left (south) onto county road EE22. Drive about 1/2 mile, passing through 2 gates; then turn left on the first 2-track to the left. Continue for about another 1/2 mile, heading toward the rock walls to your left. The road continues up to the panel, but you can park your vehicle at any time and enjoy a nice hike.

In this photo, the large boulder on the right is the petroglyph rock.

Shaman Panel

Back on Highway 90, drive four miles west to mile marker 25. On the right side of the road is a slight decline leading to a wire gate. Travel this road for about 1 mile to an un-drivable sandy wash. Park here and hike through the wash. The road splits, both will take you to the sites. You are aiming toward the broad dome that tops the mesa.

After about a half-mile hike, you will see the boulder area pictured above. This large rock is in a fenced parcel. It displays several animals and tracks. Follow the footpaths to another large boulder beyond the fenced area. Look for anthropomorphs, deer, and lines.

Now you will drop down to the dirt track and hike about 1/2 mile further east to a small canyon that has a pronounced path leading up to it. You will climb up about 20 feet above a small pool. A few panels await you here, and they are magnificent! Geometric patterns, spirals, lines, tracks, insects, and animals...truly a mystical-magical place.