

Sierra Rock Art Tour

Led by Dan Foster, John Betts, and Michael Baldrica
August 20, 2011

Over 30 people attended the Sacramento Archeological Society's sponsored Sierra/Rock Art Field Trip on Saturday, August 20. We were fortunate to have archeologists, Dan Foster lead the field trip to spectacular Meadow Lake rock art site within the high country in the Northern Sierra Nevada. Dan Foster who studied and published an article with Betts and Sandelin on the Style 7 Rock Art and Martis Archaeological Complex, of which Meadow Lake is a world-class Style 7 petro glyph site. We were also blessed to have two other notable Style 7 Rock Arch scholars Michael Baldrica, District Archaeologist on the Tahoe National Forest and John Betts who has recorded more Style 7 sites than anyone joined Dan in his talk to the group and answer questions. Also Nevada Rock Art Society was engaged in a formal petroglyph recording project. We were fortunate to receive a briefing from that group.

The Meadow Lake is a spectacular example of the Style 7 group of Rock Art sites found only in the high country of the Northern Sierra Nevada. About 150 sites of this style are now known. This is one of the largest Style 7 sites containing several hundred petroglyph images concentrated across an area about 3 acres in size. Style 7 Rock Art (first defined by Sam Payen in 1966) is thought to be associated with the **Martis Archaeological Complex**, is some of the oldest forms of rock art found in the area (perhaps about 4000 years old). Although the style exhibits more variability in terms of subject matter depicted than any of the other styles in the area, it is also highly distinctive, and sites of this group are easily recognized as part of a very similar pattern - even sites 75 miles apart. The patterns of site selection, environmental setting, types of rock surfaces utilized, and subject matter, as well as archaeological associations, provide us with a Style 7 signature.



Group at Meadow Lake



Meadow Lake Petroglyph



Meadow Lake Petroglyph

In addition the group visited Kyburz Flat Interpretive Area. **Michael Baldrica**, District Archaeologist on the Tahoe National Forest lead this part of the tour. The area was inhabited by Washoe Indians who lived there perhaps as early as 200 years ago up to the 1850's when emigrants began using the Henness Pass route. We examined a Kyburz petro glyph, Type 2 Rock Art consisting of cupules. These are small round pits that have been ground into the rock surface. Kyburz Flat also included the ruins of an 1860 Stage Stop, More's Station.



Group at Kyburz Flat



Kyburz Fl Petro glyph



More's Station

Here are two on-line articles about Style 7 Rock Art: (courtesy of Dan Foster)

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/archaeology/Abstract_Representational.php

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/archaeology/downloads/Style7RockArt_and_TheMartisComplex.pdf

The first one is a summary piece with good photos. The second one is Dan's 30-page published article.