

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF MIDDLE SAND CANYON
EAST ROCK CANYON, AND GRAVEYARD CANYON,
MONTEZUMA COUNTY, COLORADO**

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ABSTRACT

A Class III archaeological survey covering approximately 1600 acres of public land in the Sand Canyon, East Rock Canyon, and Graveyard Canyon areas was conducted by McElmo Canyon Research Institute (MCRI) under the auspices of Kelly Place, for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) between March 1997 and March 1998. The inventory area was composed of five non-contiguous survey areas located in Township 36 N., Range 17 W., Section 30, and in Township 36 N., Range 18 W., Sections 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 25, and 36, New Mexico Prime Meridian. The work was completed under a cooperative agreement between MCRI/Kelly Place and the BLM under cultural use permit C-60522. Partial funding was provided by the Colorado Historical Society under the State Historical Fund Grant # 97-01-144, with matching funds/volunteers provided by MCRI/Kelly Place and the BLM. The work was performed as part of an ongoing BLM management program directed at assessing, minimizing, and stabilizing recreational impacts to archaeological resources in the Sand Canyon Inventory and National Register Designation Project for the Sand/East Rock Canyons Cultural Emphasis Area. This project represents Phase III of the BLM's current management plan.

As a result of the field inventory, a total of 136 cultural resources were identified consisting of 100 sites and 36 isolated finds. A total of 73 new archaeological sites were recorded, and 29 previously recorded sites were re-located and re-recorded. All were evaluated for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Prehistoric sites include: 22 sheltered architectural sites, 15 of which are cliff dwellings and 5 of which served in a more limited function as storage and/or field houses, one isolated kiva, and one dry laid wall which is modern in its surface artifact assemblage, but which may have a prehistoric component ; 9 are open architectural sites composed of one unit pueblo, 2 towers, 3 small hamlets or farmsteads, and 3 extended gathering camps or field houses; the remaining 69 sites are limited activity sites consisting of open camps; open artifact scatters; slab-lined features; isolated hearths; and rock art sites.

Prehistoric sites date from the Early or Middle Archaic (5000 - 1500 B.C.) through the 13th Century A.D. Most are assignable to the Anasazi Cultural Tradition (A.D. 1 - 1300). All Anasazi time periods, except ca. A.D. 750 - 930, saw human use and occupation within the project area(s). Throughout most of this time population levels were low, probably ranging from one to six households within the project area(s). During the A.D. 1150 - 1300 period, a considerable population increase is evident, with many of the Entrada Formation cliff alcoves becoming the focus of activity.

Fifty-two (52) of the sites are recommended as eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Thirty (30) others are considered potentially eligible, and fifty-four (54) are recommended as not eligible to the National Register. It is further recommended that the sites of this area be included and nominated to the National Register as a district.