



County Commissioners  
Storey County  
Virginia City, Nevada

April 9, 2007

Gentlemen:

The Nevada Rock Art Foundation (NRAF) is a 501 c (3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to protect and conserve Nevada's rock art heritage through active programs of site documentation and public education. As part of its mission, the NRAF is making a complete archaeological inventory of the Lagomarsino Canyon Petroglyph Site (26ST1) under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Special-use Permit with Storey County. This program of site documentation began in 2003 and is intended to mitigate the adverse affects of current unsupervised public visitation, which has resulted in vandalism and theft of archaeological resources. The results of archaeological inventory will also be used in the development of an archaeological preserve and site management plan to ensure the site's rich rock art heritage is conserved for the future.

The NRAF has also instigated a site stewardship program at Lagomarsino, now part of a program organized and managed by the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office with oversight by the Nevada Archaeological Association. The program allows concerned local residents to make an ongoing contribution to the protection of the site. The NRAF also has raised and expended funds for a professional conservator to restore one of the worst damaged rock art panels at the site.

As part of Foundation's MOU with Storey County, the Planning Department requested that NRAF not use county roads or private roads from Virginia City and the Virginia Highlands to access the site during the archaeological inventory. Mr. Blake Smith, of Virginia Highlands LLC, very generously agreed to allow NRAF crews to cross his property to access the Lagomarsino site during our fieldwork. This agreement is not a public easement, simply permission to cross private property for a specific, limited purpose. NRAF is greatly appreciative of the support to date that Mr. Smith has provided in helping document the site, a vital first step to its future conservation.

As a nonprofit organization we can not oppose nor endorse development projects — instead we try to work with public agencies and private organizations and citizens to achieve the best

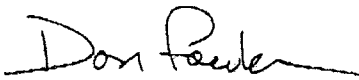
outcome for the conservation needs of rock art sites. We believe, and it is consistent with our mission, that any proposed development should not diminish or otherwise impact the setting, feeling, and association that contribute to a rock art site's status or its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If these factors might be adversely impacted by a proposed development, we believe that mitigation of these impacts be a condition before a project is approved.

We also believe that adverse effects of a project that cannot be avoided must be mitigated as a condition of the project's approval. In the case of the Lagomarsino site, one obvious adverse impact that may result from any future building development in the Virginia Highlands area, as well as in the County more generally, is a dramatic increase in unsupervised public visitation to the site. The development of a petroglyph preserve that would regulate public access to the site would be one important conservation measure that could mitigate this adverse impact.

Mitigation of visual impacts would also be necessary to counter the impact to the setting, feeling, and association that could result from development in proximity to the site. Mr. Smith and we have agreed that there are various potential impacts, and are discussing appropriate mitigation measures such as the possible donation of land by Cordevista to the county of adjacent areas on which numerous petroglyph panels are also found. This would effectively increase the size of the petroglyph preserve and help to ensure the integrity of this extremely important site which is listed on the National Register of historic places.

Should Storey County decide to allow development to move forward in lands immediately adjacent to the Lagomarsino Canyon Petroglyph Site (26ST1), the NRAF will continue to offer our commitment to the long term preservation of the rock art in whatever capacity the County deems appropriate under the terms of our MOU and Special-use permit.

Sincerely,



Don D. Fowler,  
President

Cc: NRAF Board of Directors