

EXPLORING THE CROFT Preserve FOR TRACES OF PICTOGRAPHS AND PETROGLYPHS



Photo 1960

With
Carolynne Merrell
Sue Miller
Kathy Hamlett
Julie Rodman

Owl Cave

(central in the aerial photo)
yielded remains dating back
over 10,600 years.

The ancient remains included
Folsom-style fluted points
as well as mammoth, bison,
pronghorn antelope and
camel remains.



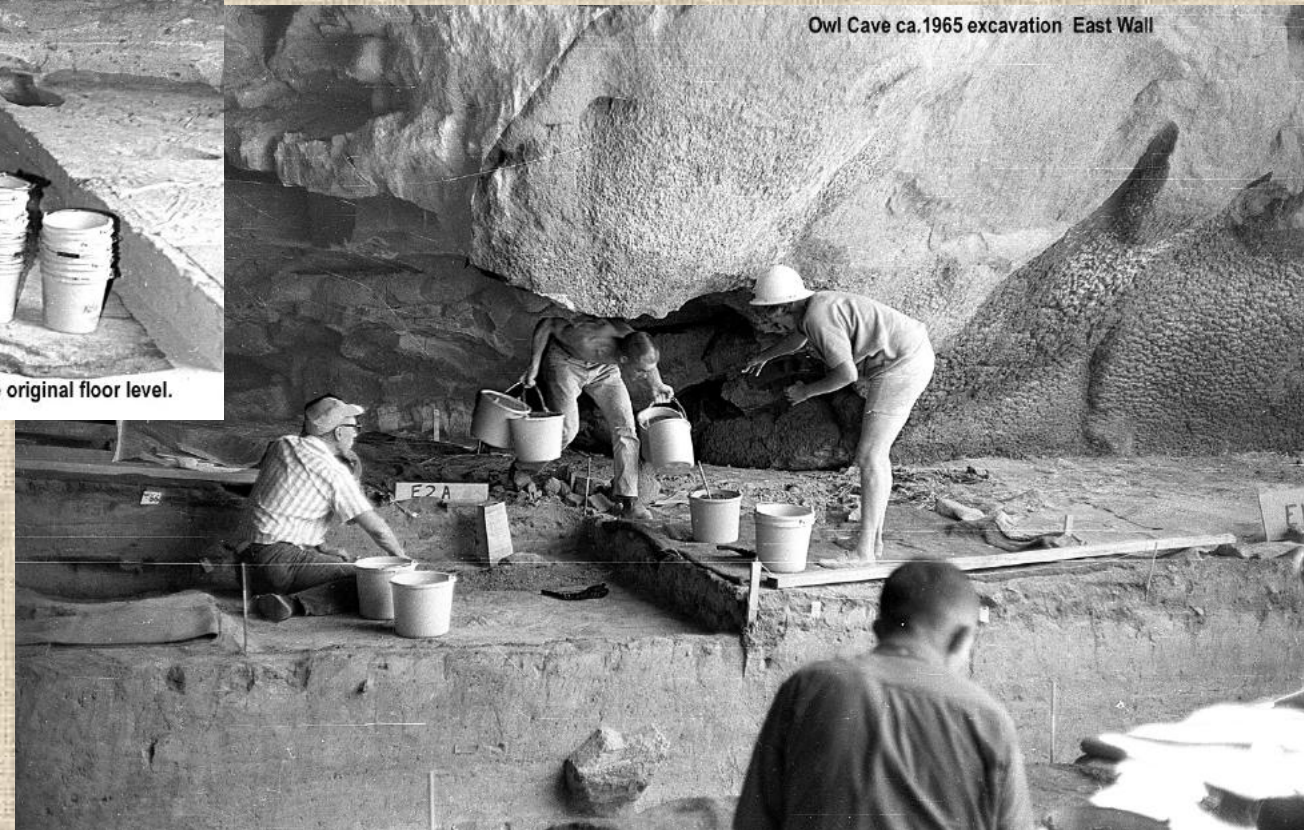
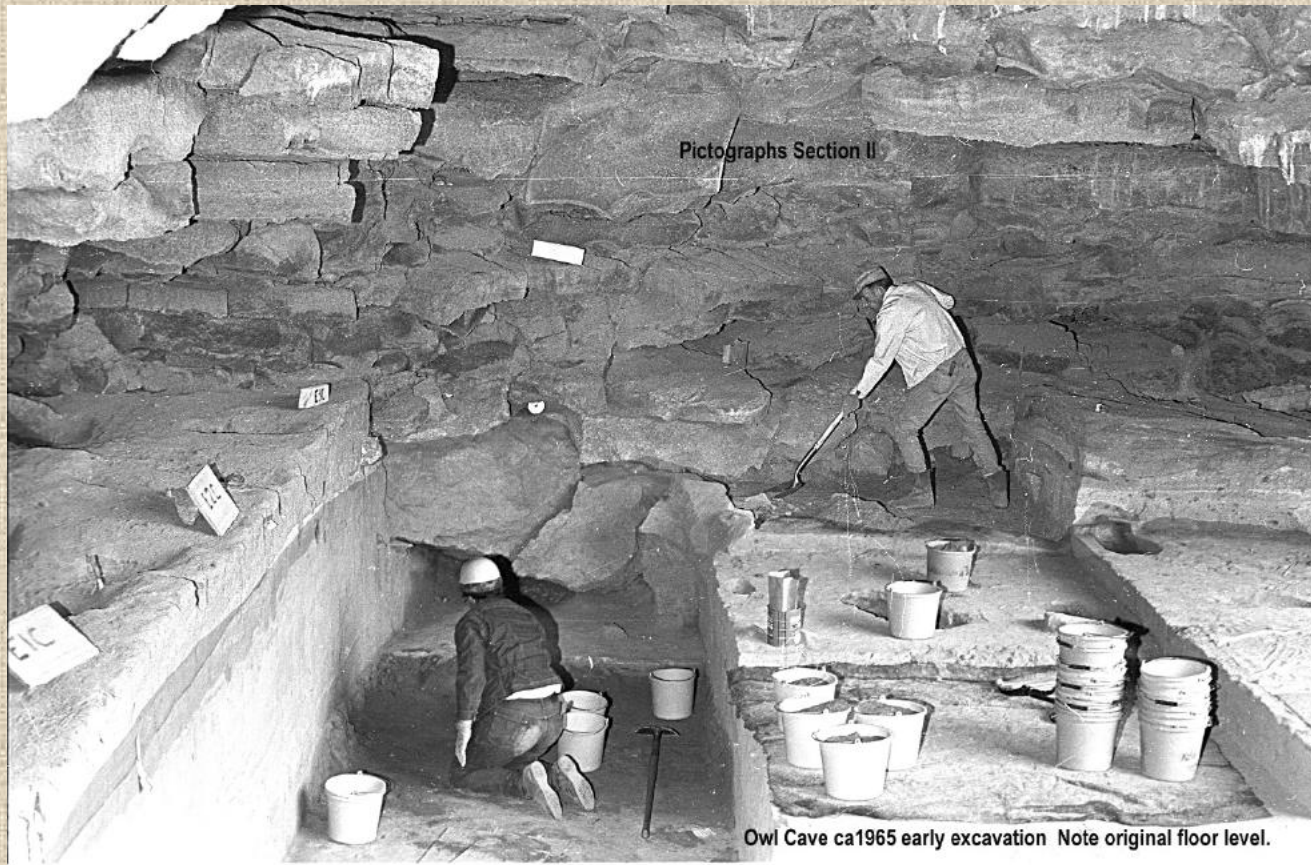


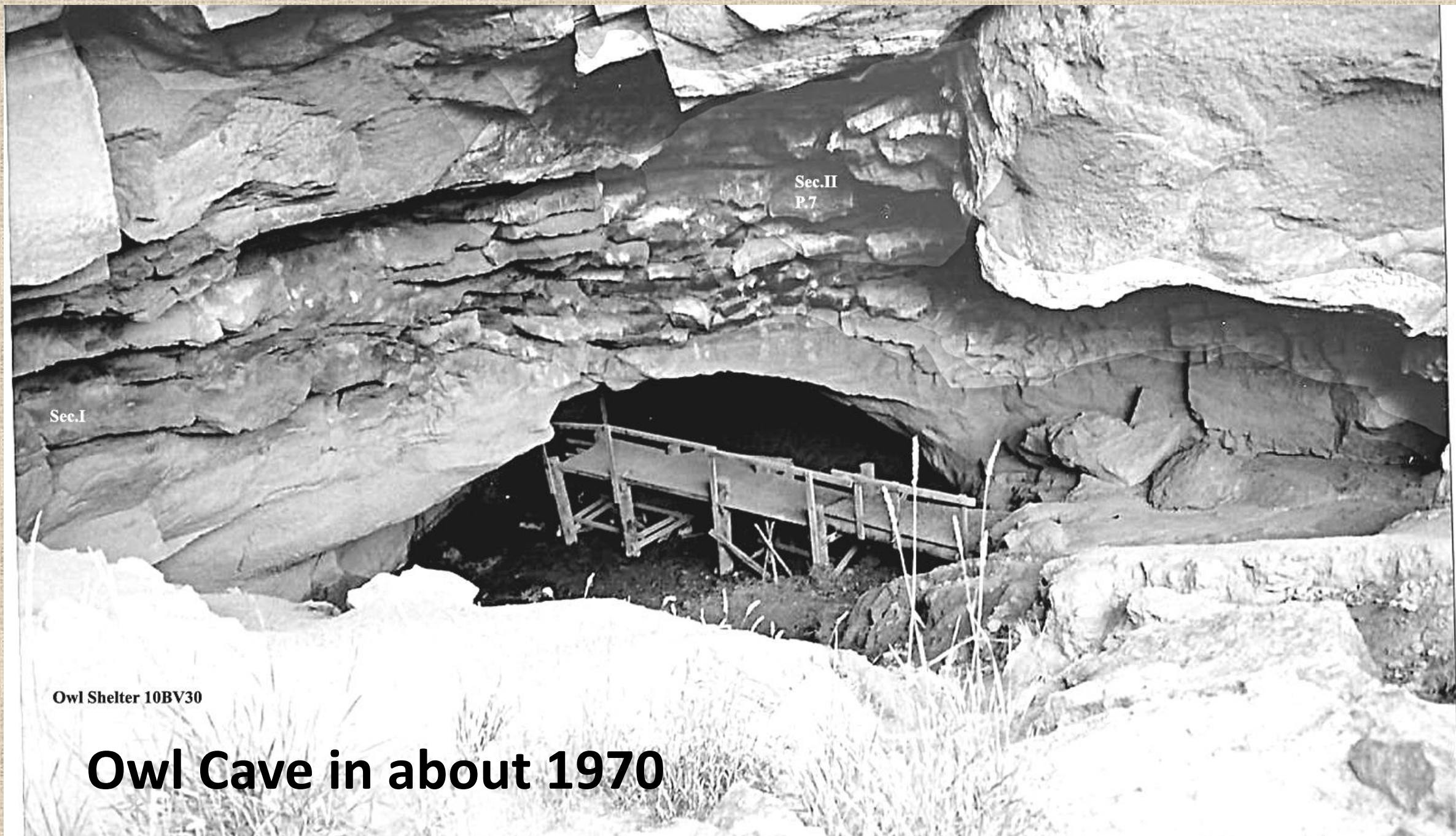


Location of pictographs noted in the early 1960s, in the vicinity of an early fire hearth found above the Mazama ash layer with a charcoal date of 3340 plus or minus 575 Years B.P.



Owl Cave early in the excavation process Mid 1960s





Sec.I

Sec.II
P.7

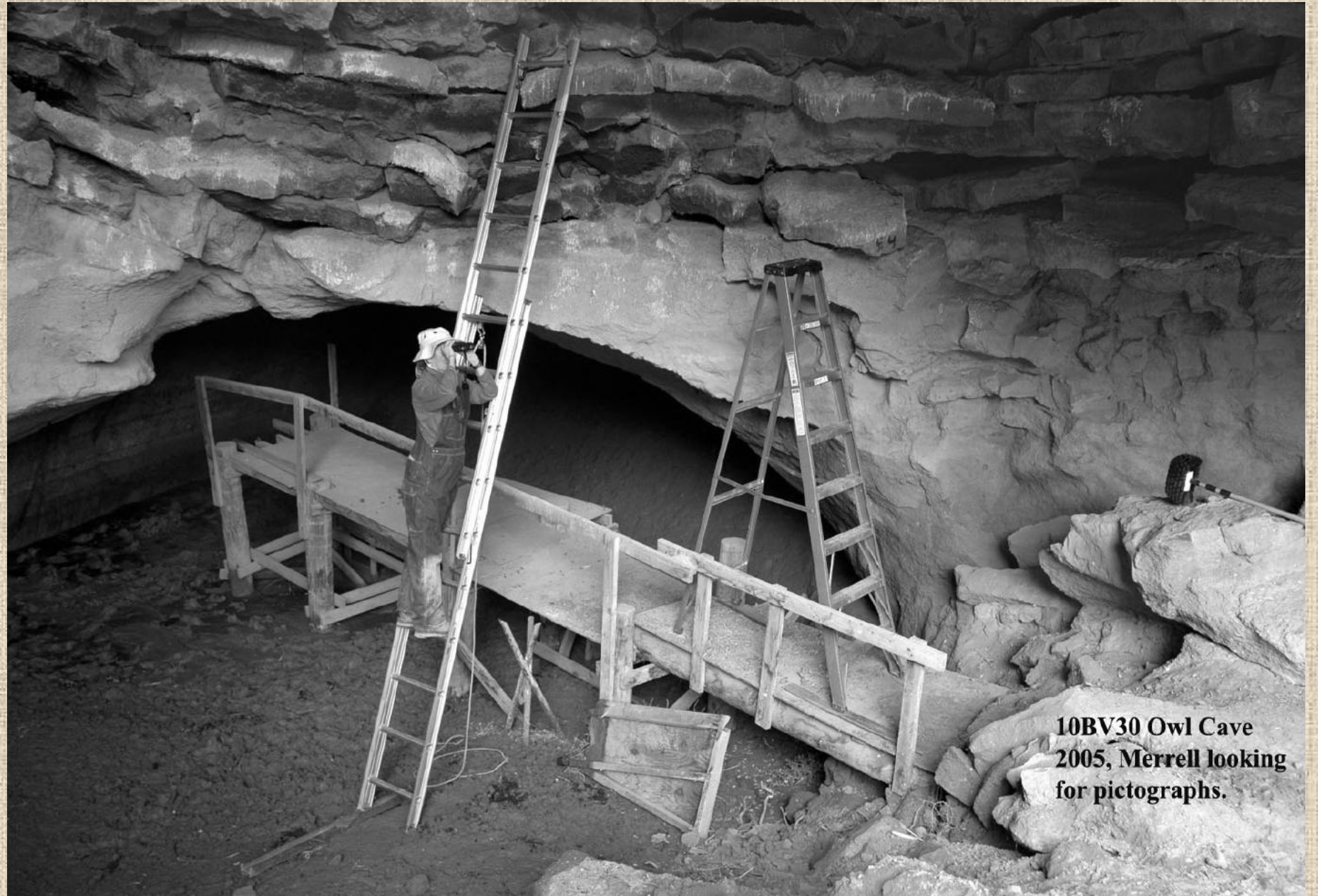
Owl Shelter 10BV30

Owl Cave in about 1970

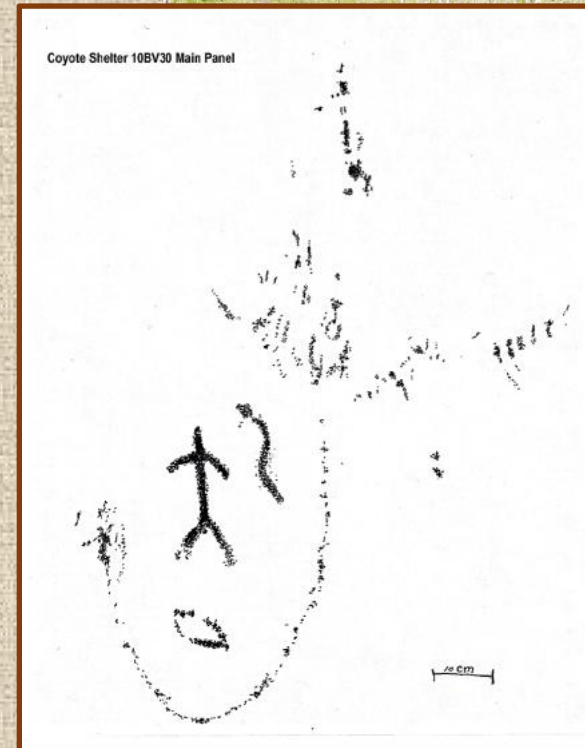
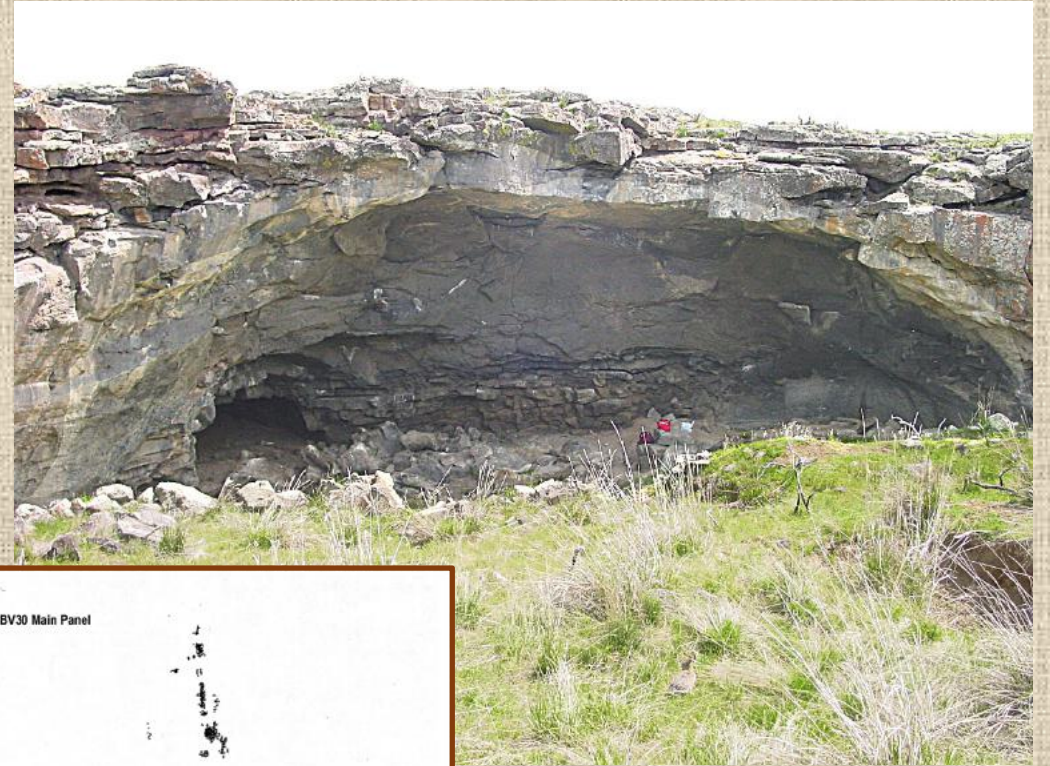
2005

**Looking for rock
art**

**AFTER
THE
FACT!!**



**10BV30 Owl Cave
2005, Merrell looking
for pictographs.**



COYOTE CAVE
One panel

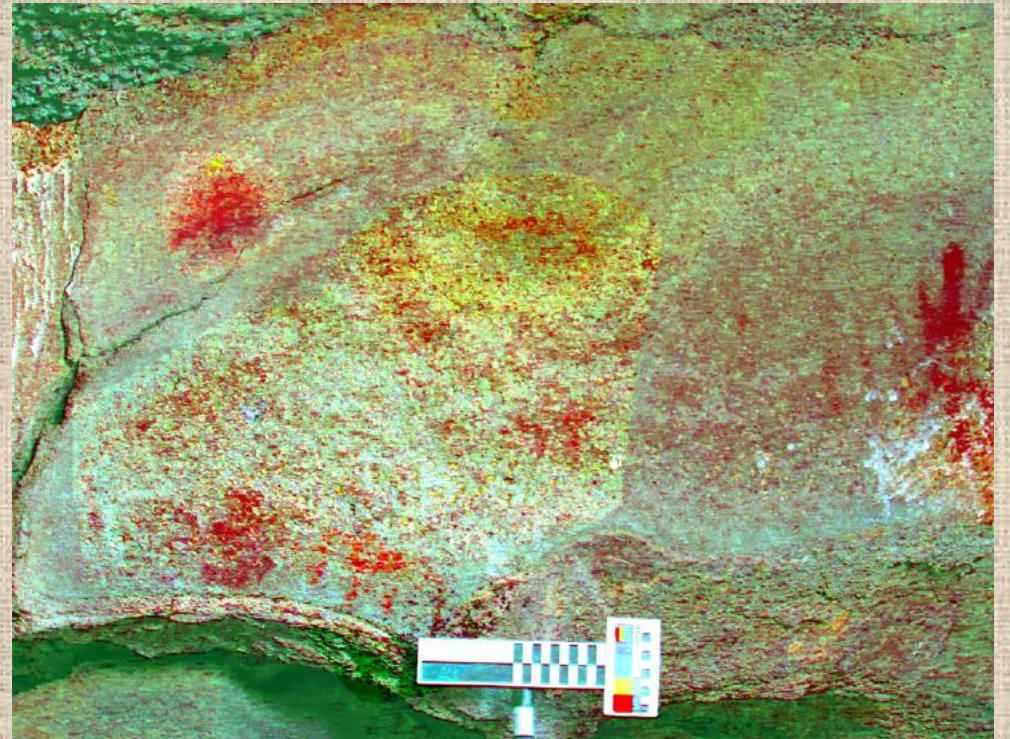
**2019
PERMISSION
GRANTED**

**2020
CONDITION**
The excavation
support ramp
has been
removed,
leaving posts
at the current
floor level



2020 OWL CAVE

With ramp
removed
Use of
sturdy
extension
pole with
dust brush
and
scale/color
guide
attached.



USE OF REFLECTOR TO BRING LIGHT TO DARKER SECTIONS



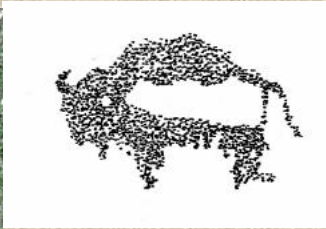
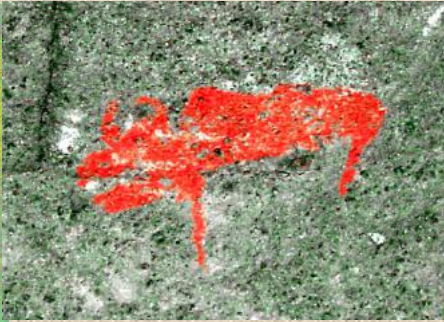
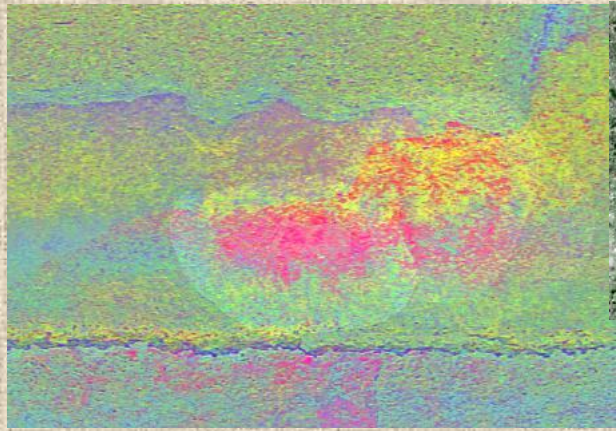
Photo Sequences

Top Left:
standard photo
Lower Left:
Photoshop

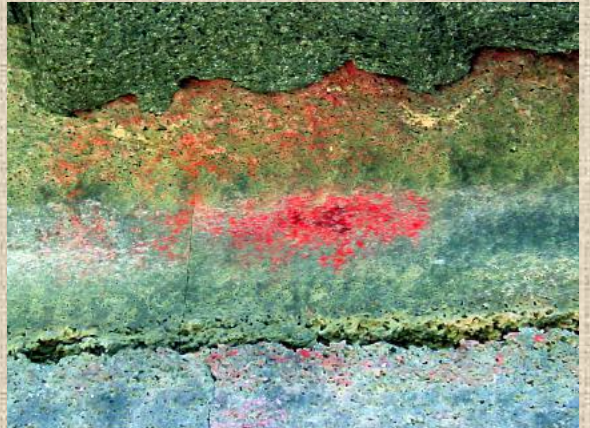
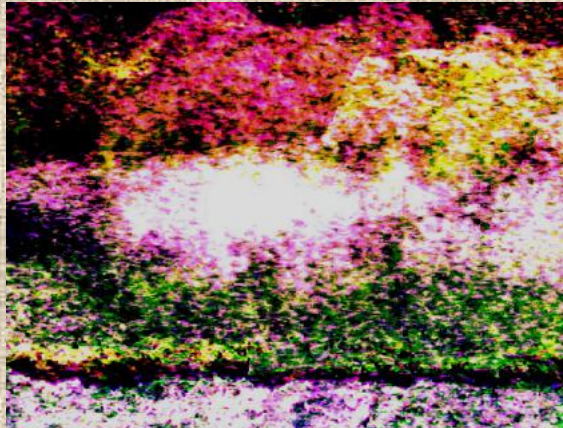
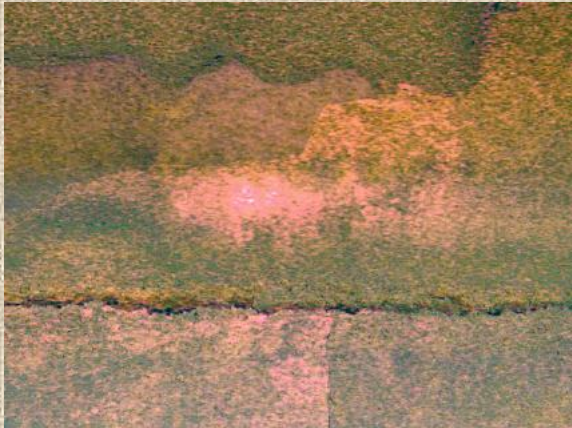
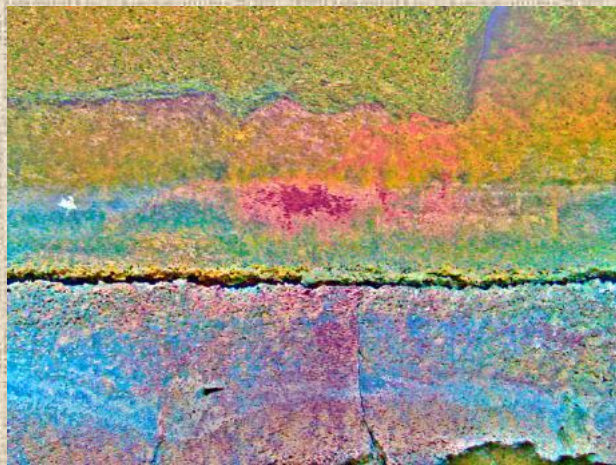
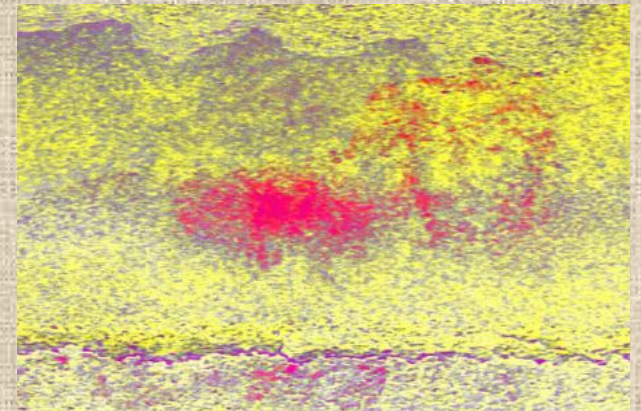
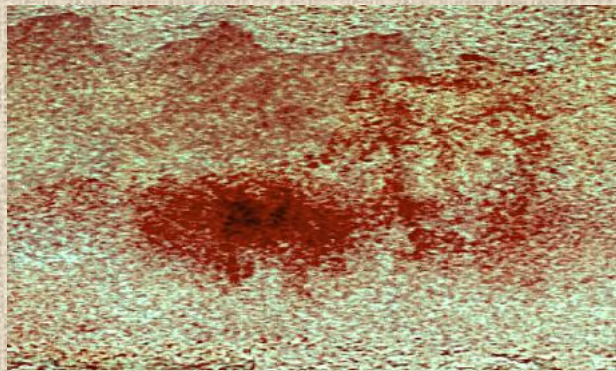



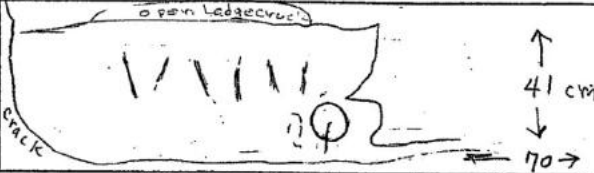
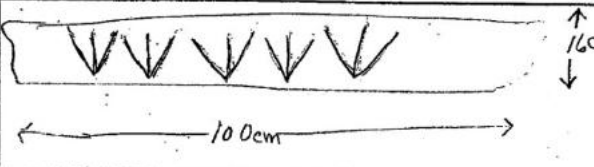
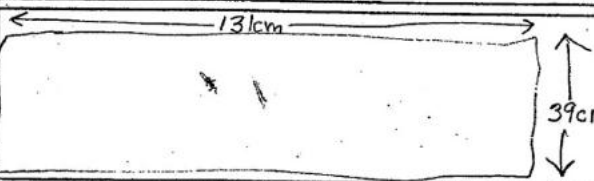
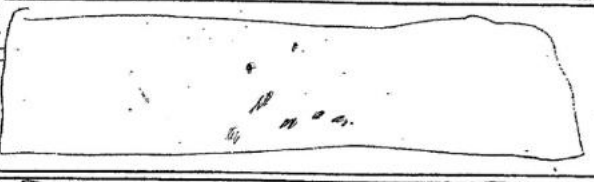

Top Right:
DStretch YWE
Lower Right:
DStretch IRE



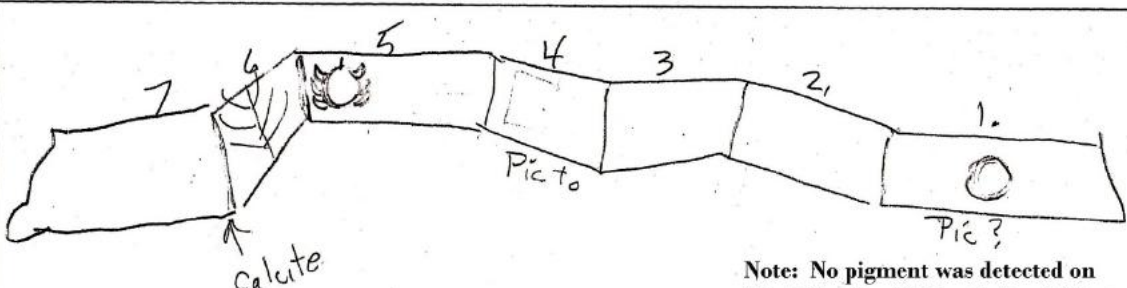


Bison examples from other Idaho cave sites to compare with one area of red ochre pigment discovered in Owl Cave, Section One that was photographed using a variety of DStretch applications.



ROCK ART RECORDING Form : Element Index/Sketch		
Site: Wasden Owl Cave 10-BV-30 Section: I	10-BV-30 No. Panels 1-6	
Recorder: C Merrell	Date: 5/20/05 Sheet of	
El. #	Description	Sketch
	Sec 1 P1 Facing SSE	
	Pigment Color red ochre	
	Sec 1 P2	
	Pigment Color very faint red orange	
	P3	
	Pigment Color very faint red orange	
	P4 2 strata below P3 Spot + vertical line	
	Pigment Color very faint red orange	
	P5 Continuation of P4 strata 1 spot	
	Pigment Color very faint red orange	
	P6 Out and above P4 Shield Bearer	
	Pigment Color	

Tier 2

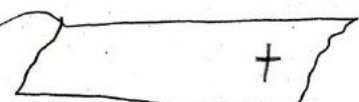


Note: No pigment was detected on Tier 2 (Section 2) Panels 2 and 3 but they were recorded and measured along the Stata in the event pigment is found later in those locations

Tier 2 Panel measurements

- H-50cm, W-150cm
- H-50cm, W-100cm
- H-50cm, W-100cm
- H-50cm, W-60cm
- H-50cm, W-100cm
- H-40-60cm, W-40cm
- H-60cm, W-115cm

Tier 3



Tier 3 Panel Measurements
H-50cm, W-75cm

IMACS Rock Art Recording Form Owl Cave OVERALL SKETCH of Section II Section: II Panel: 1-7

Include: Basic outline of rock art surface with significant natural features, rock art figures and the approximate dimensions of the section or panel area. Total Number of Sections or Panels at this site: _____

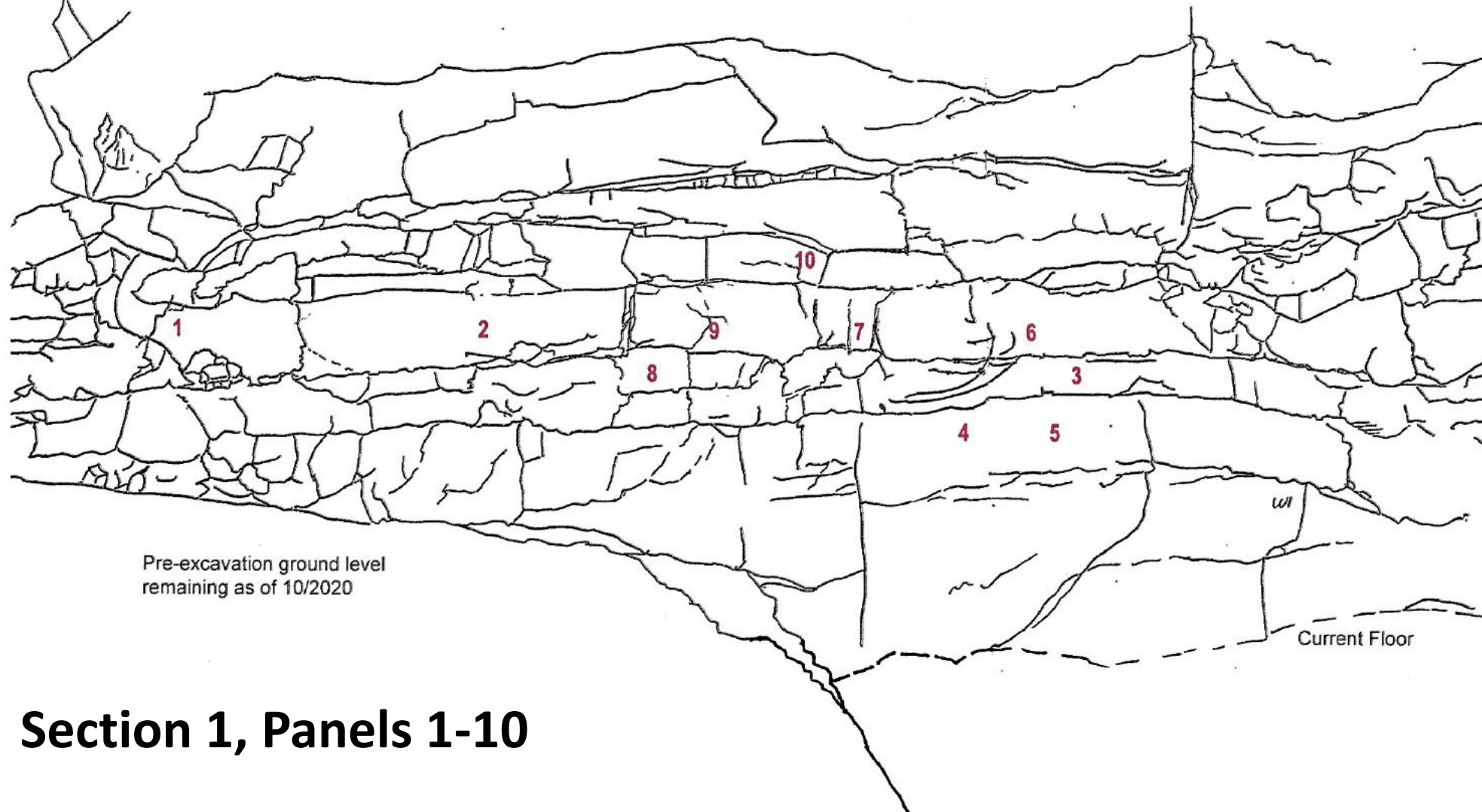
Site No.: 10-BV-30 Recorder: C. Merrell Date: / / Drawing No. / of /

Standard field forms

Technical Recording Challenges

1. A major problem is the accumulation of surface dust that has adhered to the rock surfaces from the years of excavating even after a light brushing. This dust enhanced to a yellow hue in both DStretch and Photoshop.
2. A further complication was that the edges of many surfaces had less dust accumulation, retaining more of the natural blue-gray color of the basalt. This created an uneven appearance for the focus of the photographs.
3. Changes in lighting, shooting distance from subject, exposure and variety of angles shot resulted in varied details for any single element of panel overview. As a result, the final illustration was the result of studying the varied features evident in several photos and applying a combination of features that best defined that element.
4. Two geologic factors that affected the enhancement/DStretch process were that the basalt contains a degree of iron which can appear red in DS where the natural iron mimics red pigment and in many areas where the rocks are pocked with gas bubbles it is difficult to follow any applied pigment over the host rock.
5. The best results were seen when the pictographs were located under protecting, overhanging, rock tiers that helped preserve and protect the pigment over time.

Owl Cave (10BV30)
Section I Panels 1-10

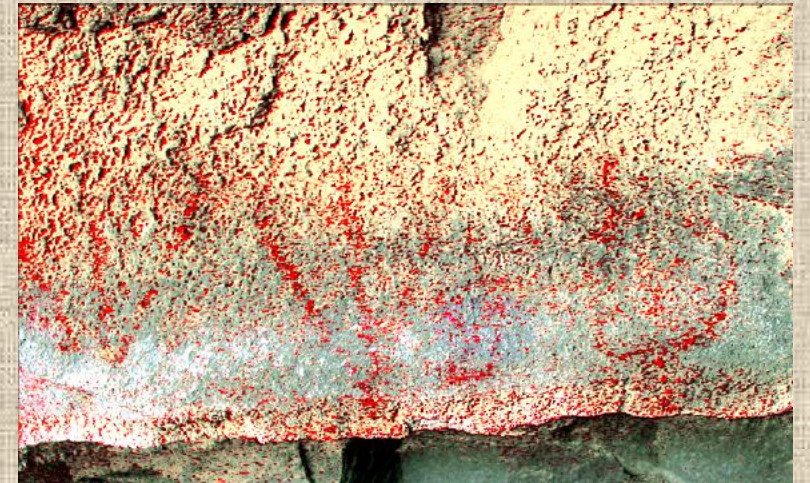


Section 1, Panels 1-10

FINAL Pictographs recorded

SECTION 1 Panels 1-11 All in red/orange ochre pigment

4 simple shield bearers, 1 likely bison, 2 track series, tally sets plus several amorphous areas of traces of pigment.

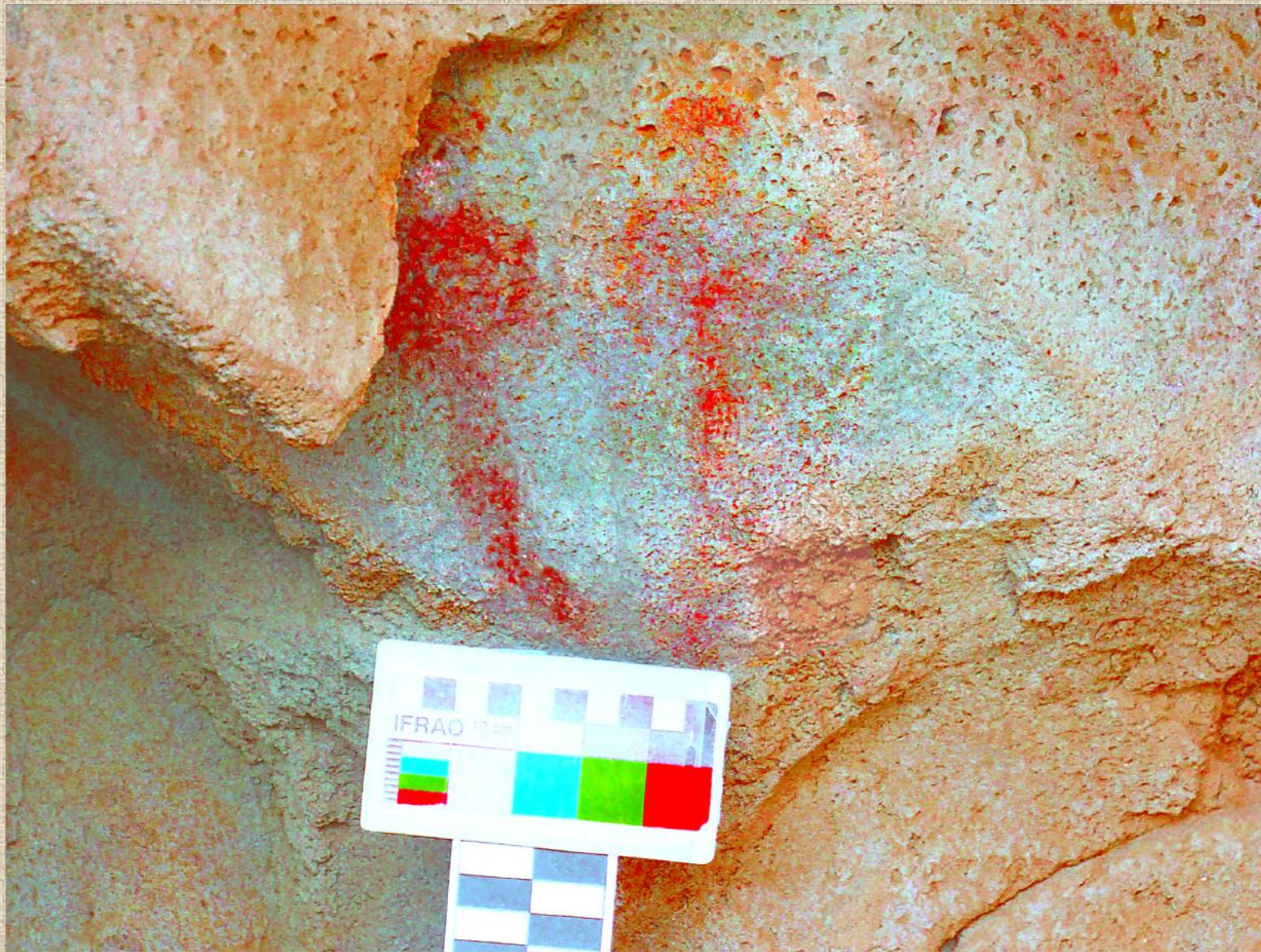


Two panels showing track type elements. Note faint shield in panel on right.

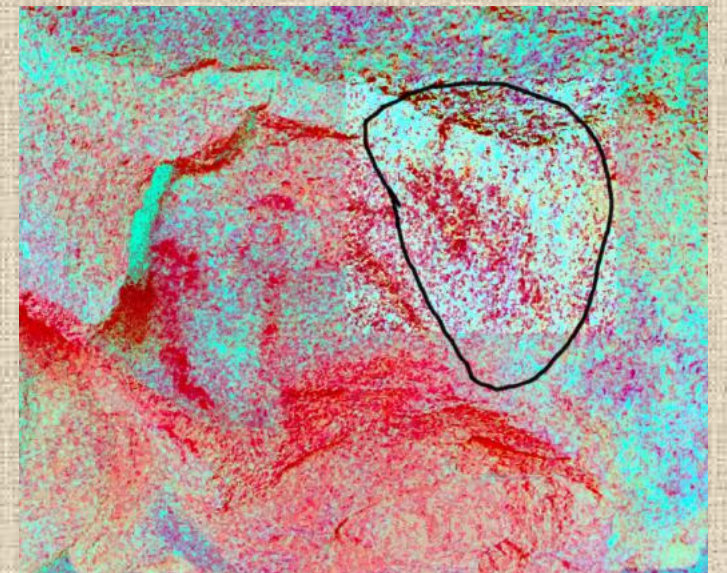
The Process Following the Pigment Trail Sec. 1, P. 1

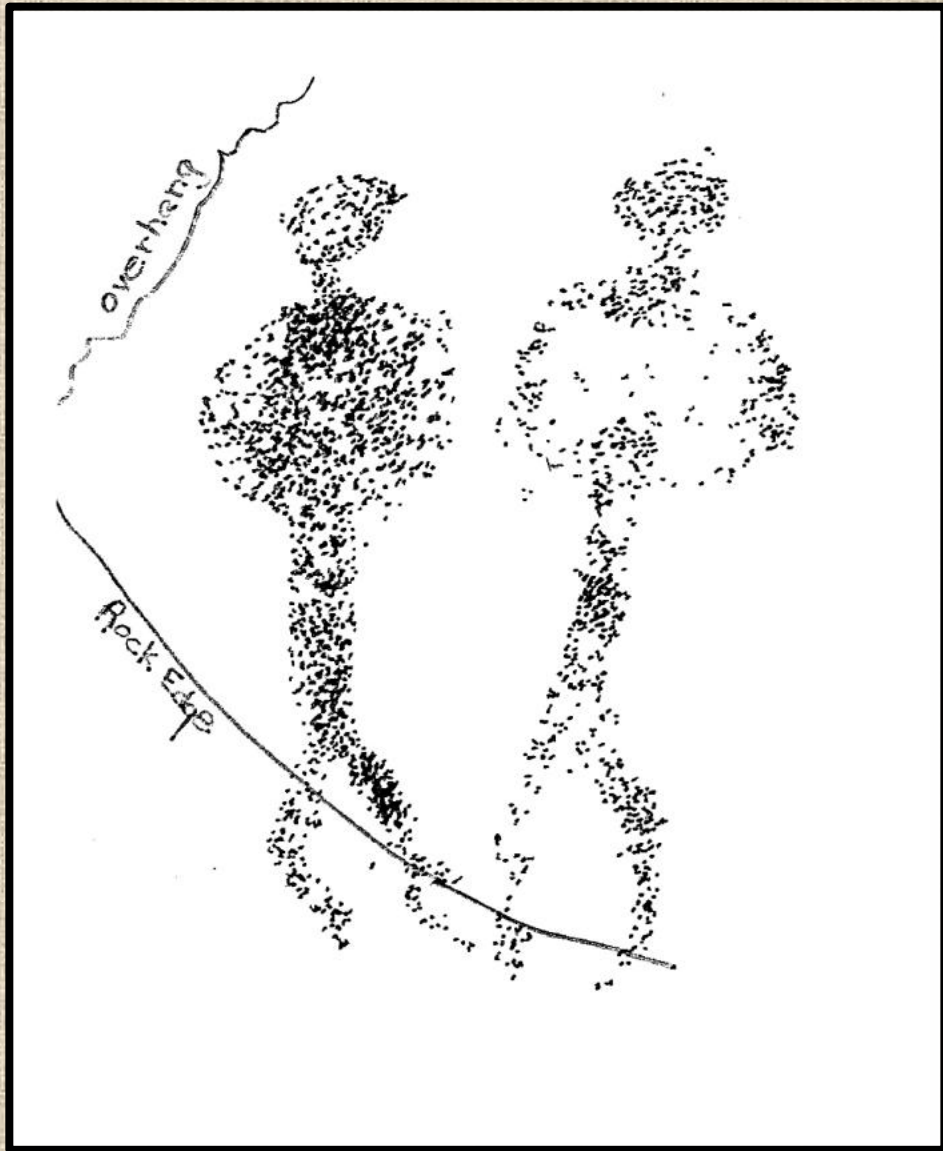


ENHANCED ONLY!



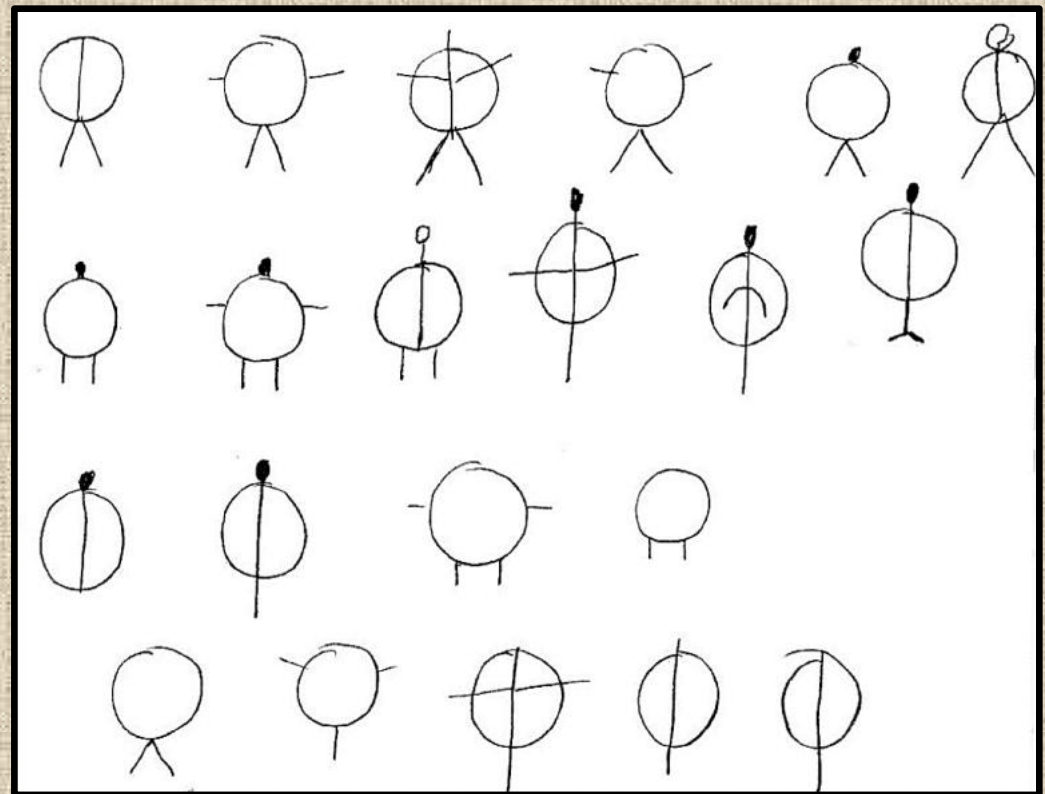
**DSTRETCH WITH FURTHER
PHOTOSHOP ENHANCEMENT**



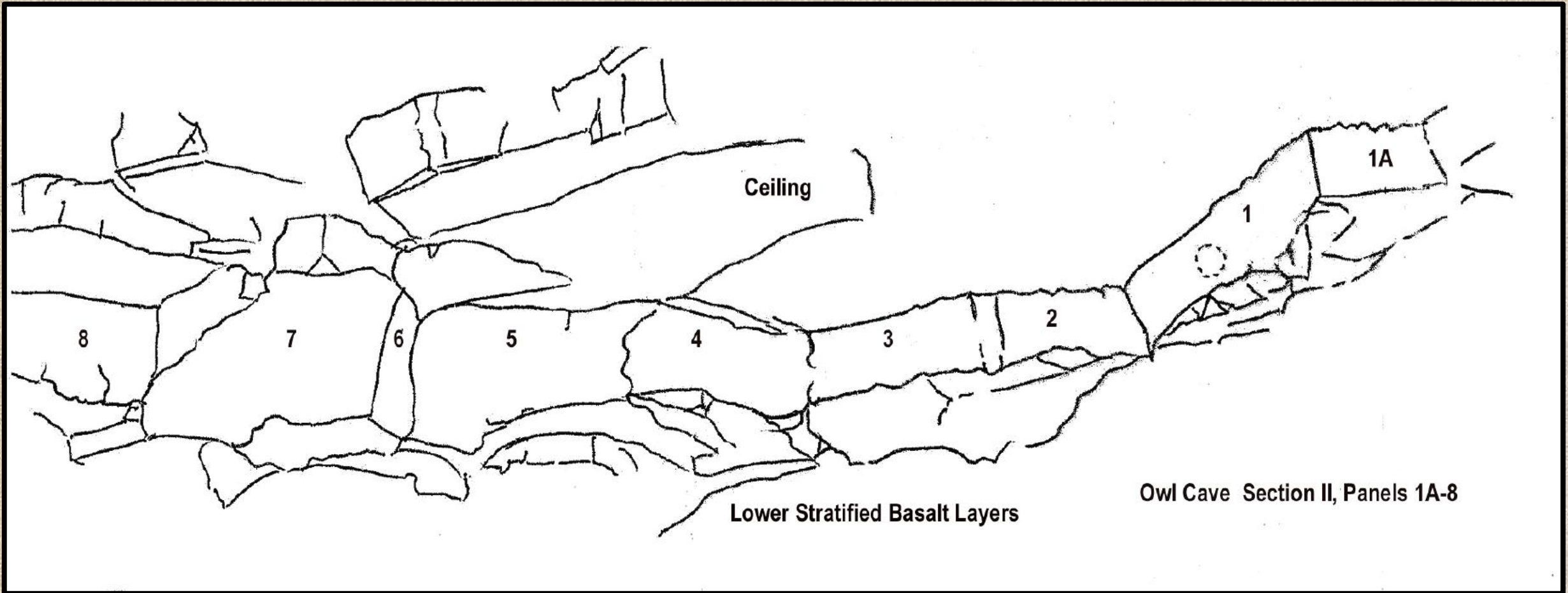


Final tracing from a composite of photos

Section 1, Panel 1 is identified as 2 shield bearers. They show classic characteristics found in many of the simple pictograph and petroglyph shield bearers in southwest Idaho. Comparable Idaho types are shown below.



Section 2 Panels 1-8

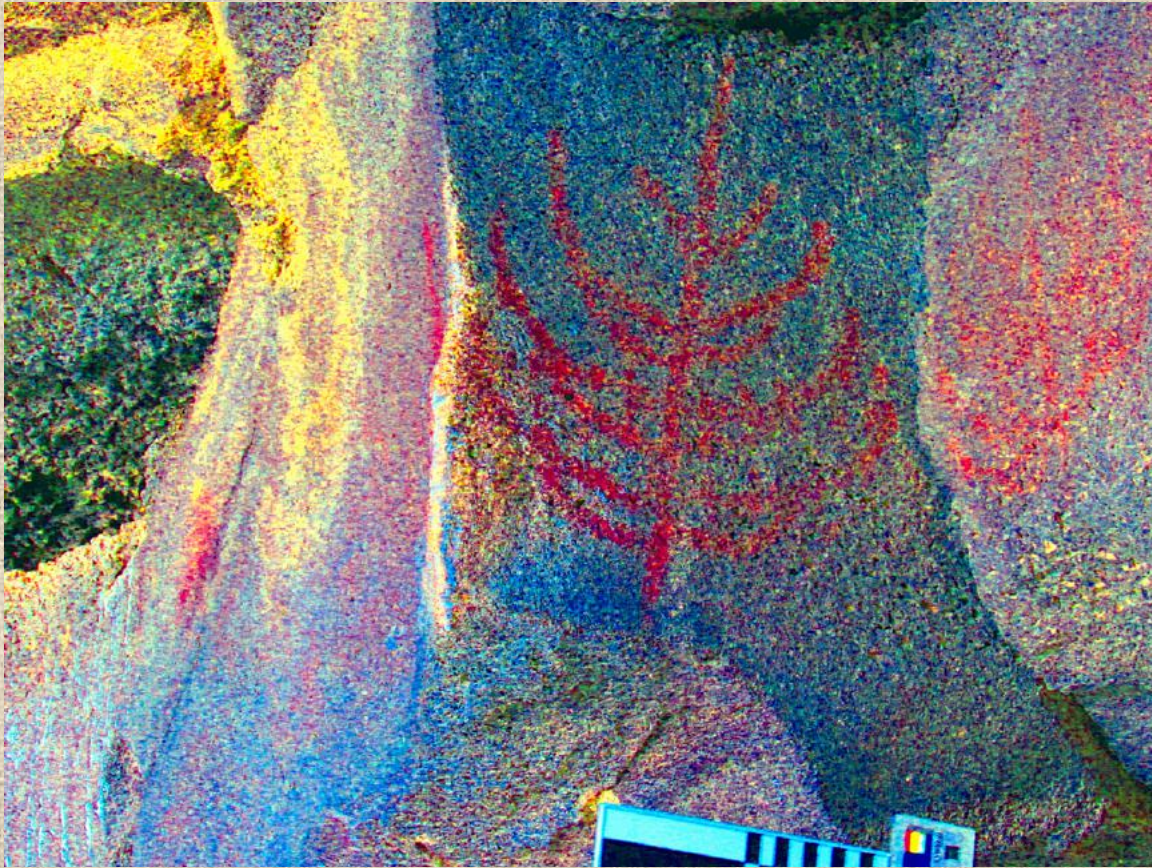


Pigment was found along one segmented seam of basalt. Focus will be on Panels 4-6 that we consider to be the most significant pictographs at the site.

2005 Enhanced Sec.2, Ps. 4-7

Carolynne Merrell Photo





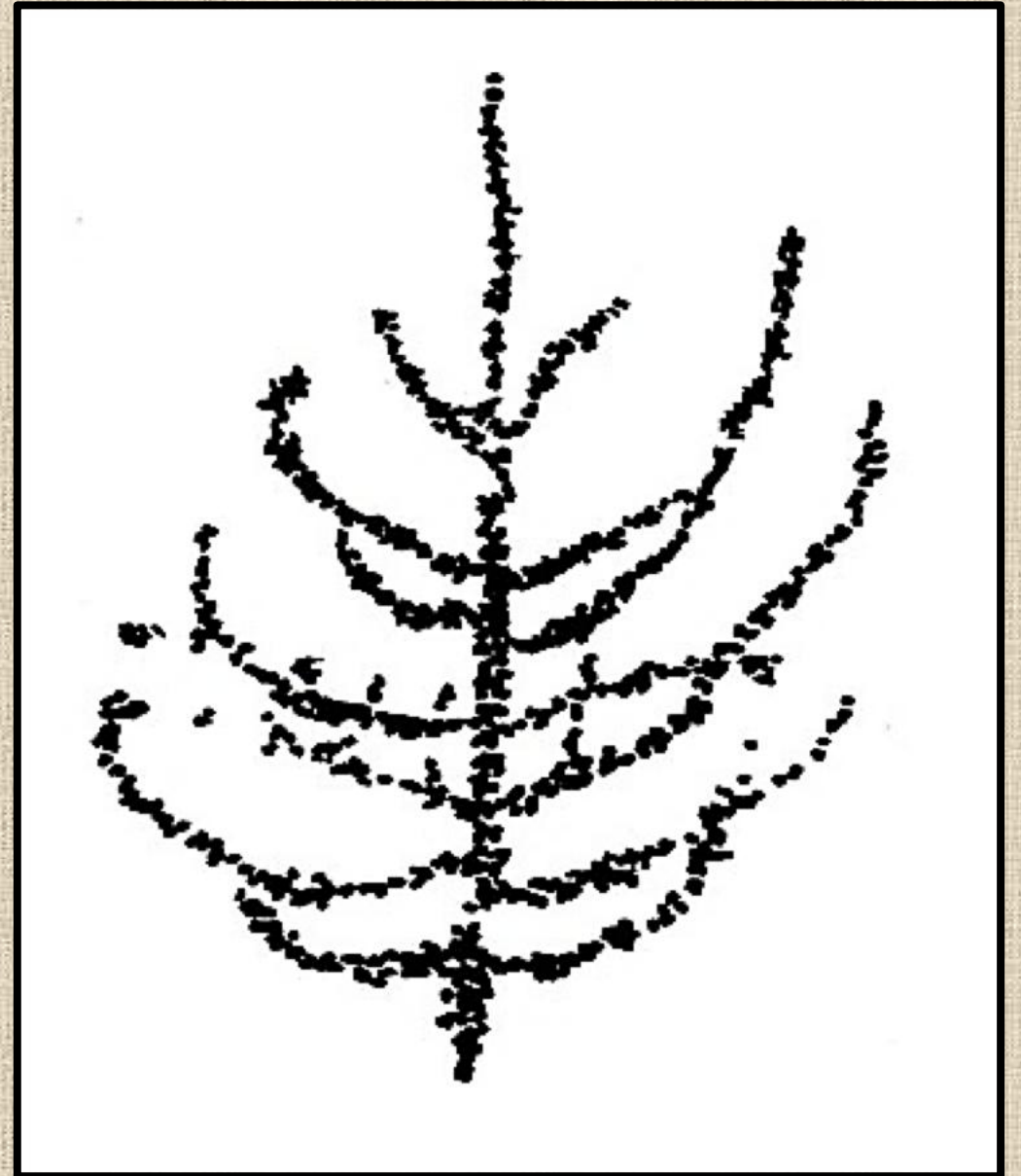
Section2,Panel 6
Photo24 DSTRETCH AC_IDS

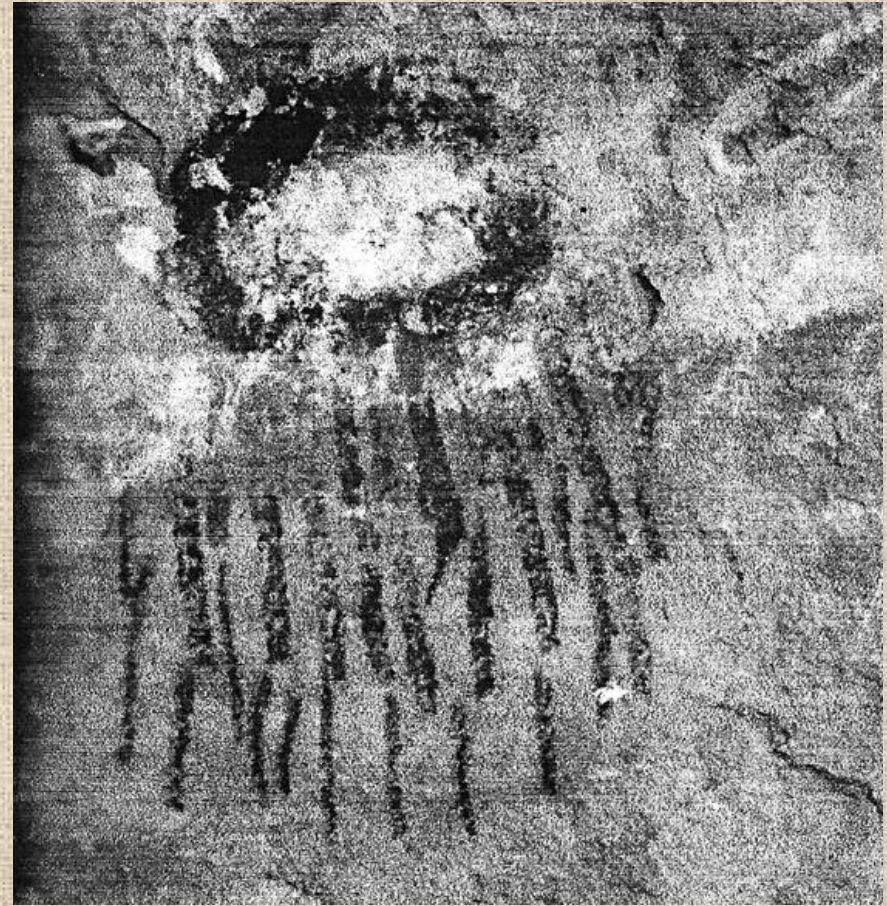
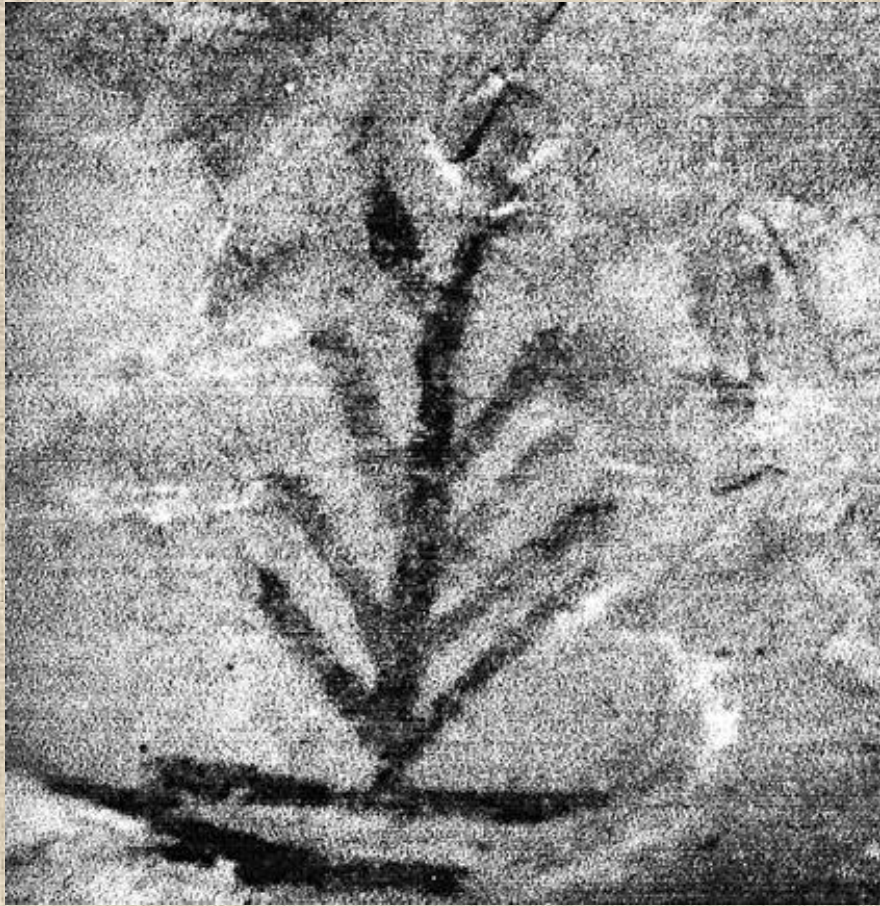


**Photo 24 with Photoshop applied
to DStretch with adjustments for
sharpening and lightening the dark
blues with a touch of contrast.**



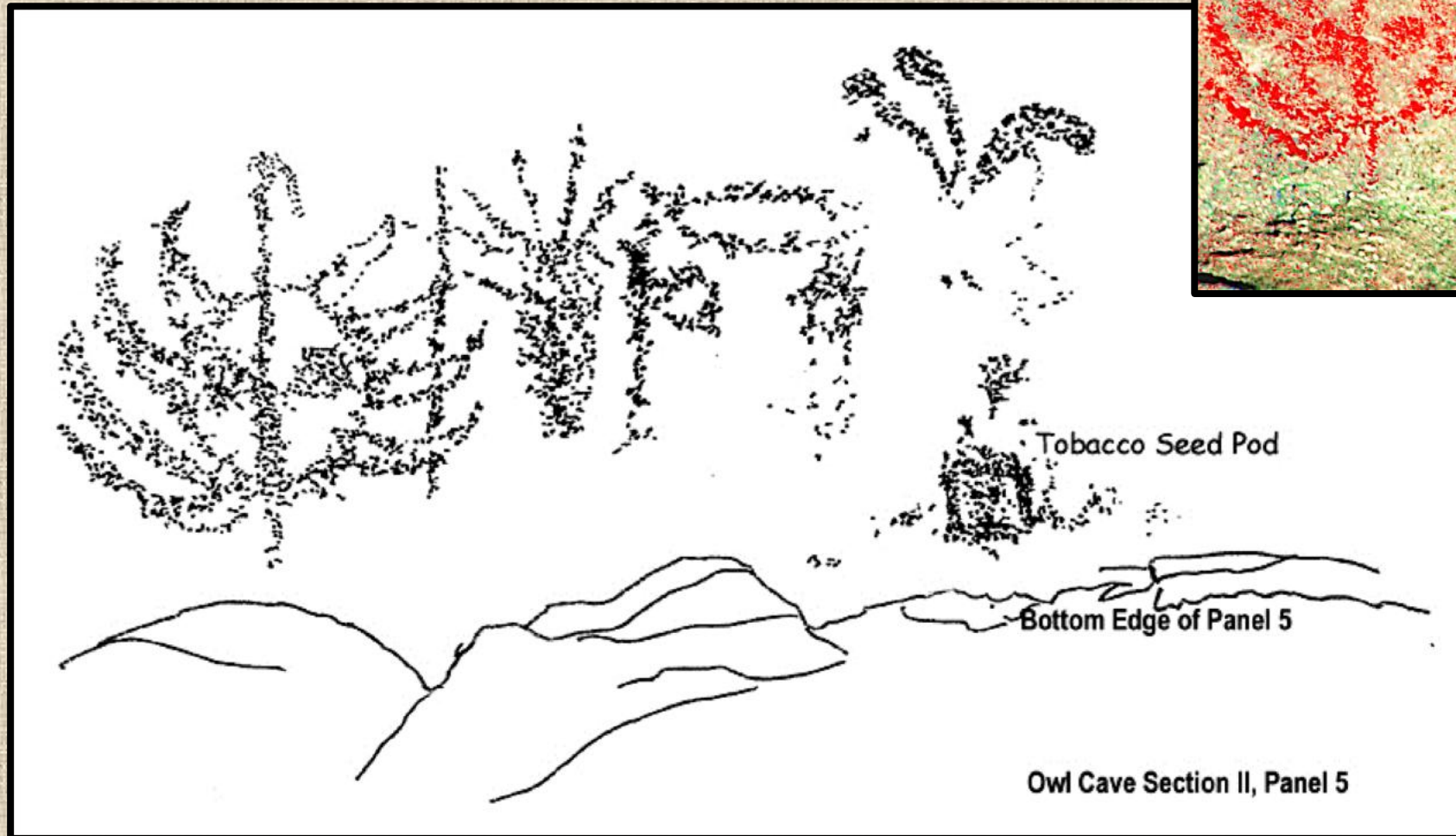
**Possible tobacco plant, based on
consult with Loendorf. Two rows of
“dots” may represent tobacco seeds.**





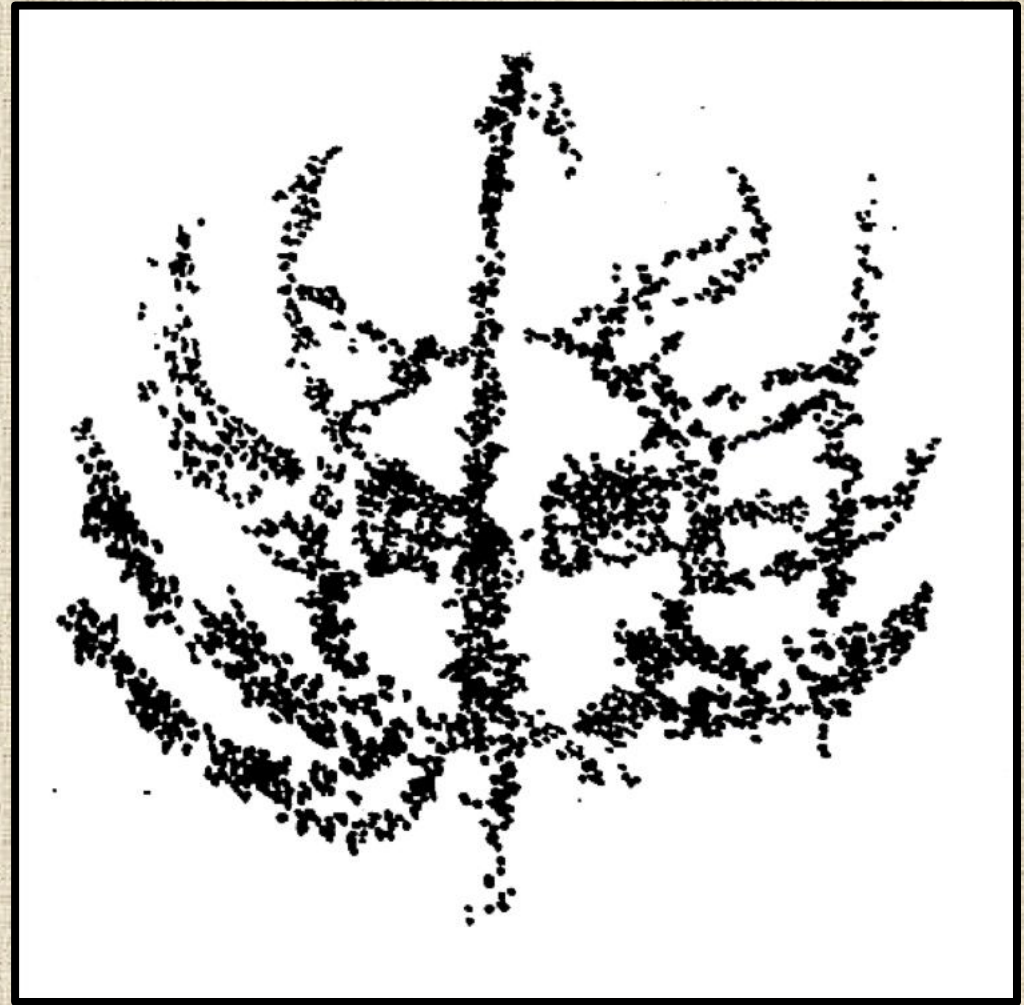
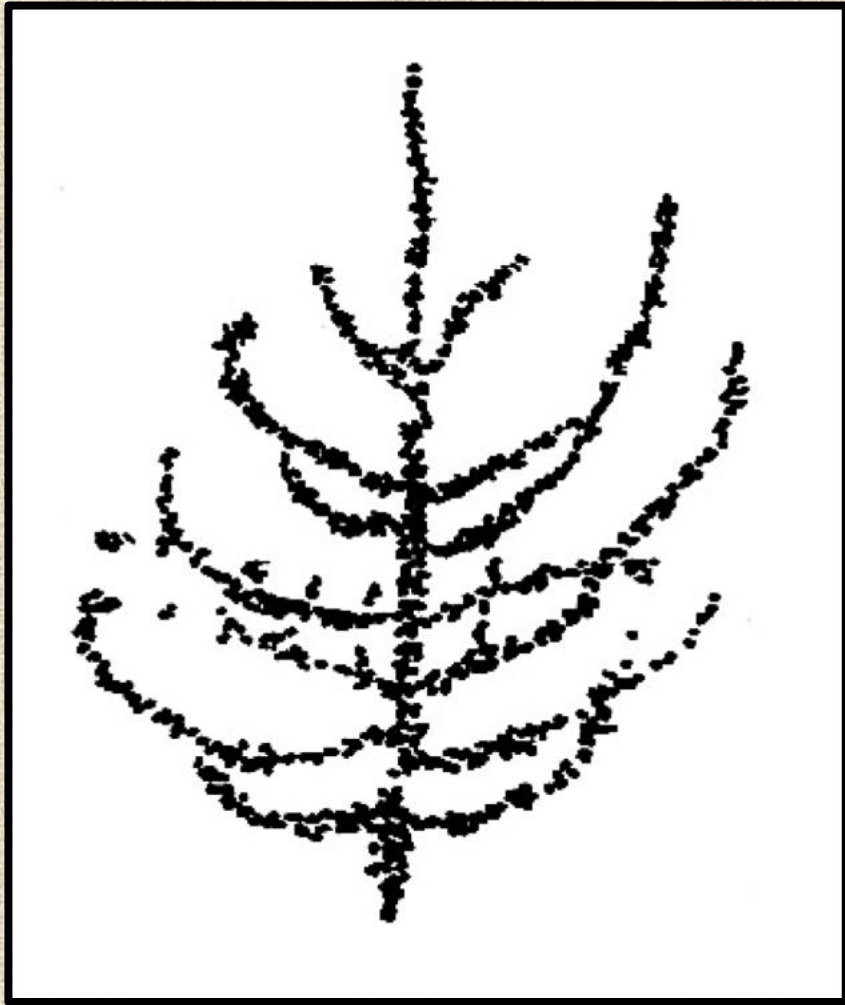
Crow pictograph representation of a tobacco plant and a seedpod painted in red ochre. Photos provided by Larry Loendorf. The Crow recognized the variety *Nicotina Multivalis* as their sacred tobacco.

Section 2, Panel 5



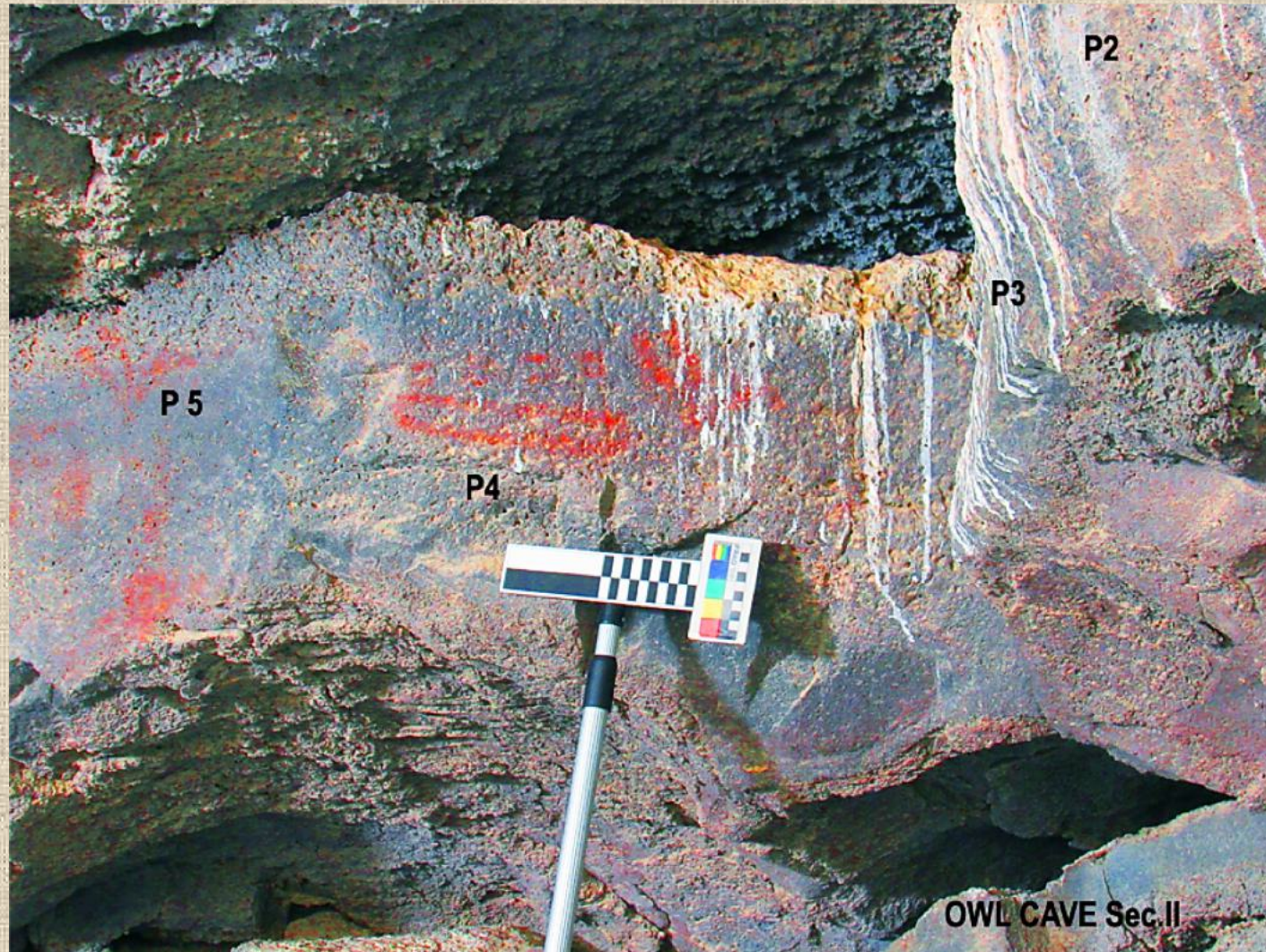


Key panels in Section 2 that suggest a possible connection to a sacred tobacco representation.



A comparison between the tobacco plant, left and the adjacent element suggests that the element on the right represents an anthropomorphized tobacco spirit. (Loendorf Consult)

Section 2, Panel 4



2005 before bird droppings covered one area of pigment.

A late discovery,
just below the ceiling
and above Section 2
is a cross, identified
as a star related to
the Crow creation
myth for the tobacco
plant.
(McCleary 1997:18)



Summary and conclusions

The “rediscovery” of the pictographs at the Croft Preserve raises the acknowledgement of this site to sacred status in the eyes of the Northern Shoshone and other indigenous groups. Tribal consultations should be required for any future work at the Croft Preserve that may further damage the pictographs.

The early artifact collections gathered during the first years of the excavating have been recently given to the Museum of Idaho and are now in the process of being cataloged so more recent dates may yet be forthcoming.

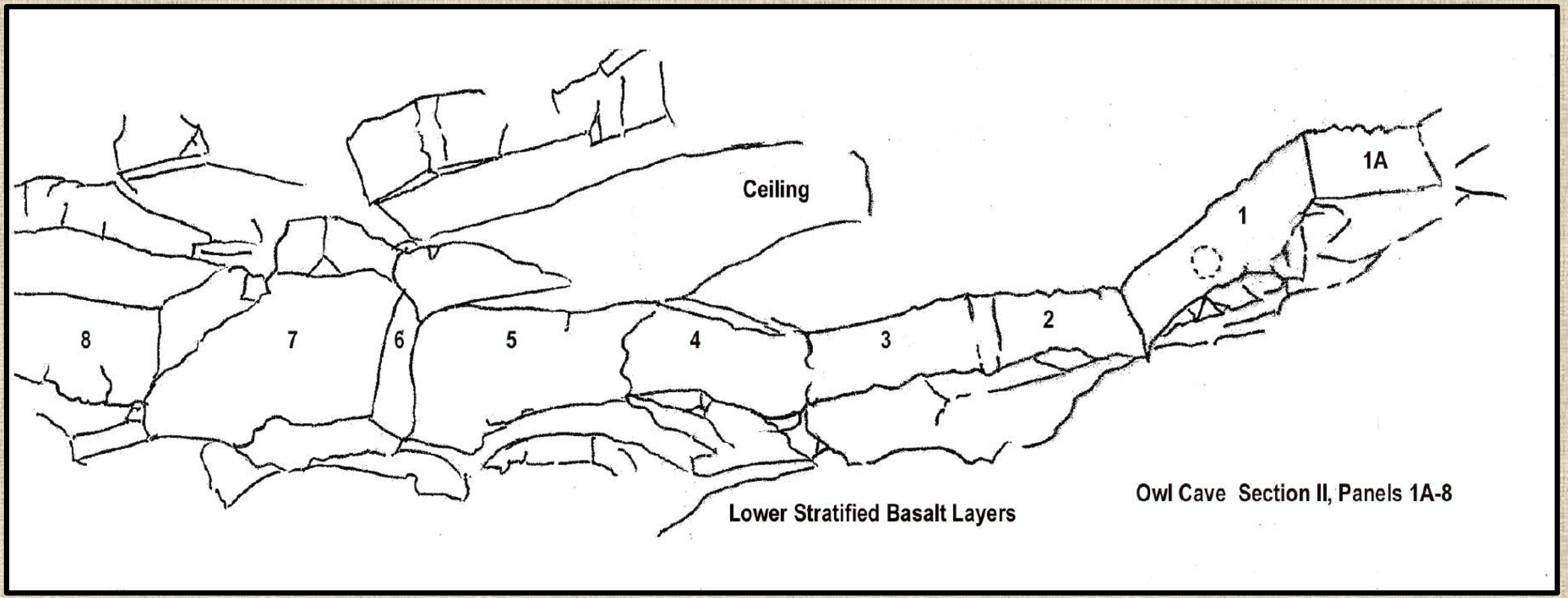
Application of newer non-invasive technological advances may provide increased information for the illusive areas of identified pigment as well as to gain permission to date pigment samples.

An Historic and Prehistoric Tobacco Connection for the Shoshone in eastern Idaho

Recovery of tobacco seeds at recent Bobcat Shelter excavation dated A.D. 130 to 320, and Cottontail Shelter dated between A.D. 905 and 985.

Ethnographic information regarding the protohistoric and historic cultivation of tobacco by the Lemhi Shoshone comes from a contact born in a Tukutika Village in about 1850, speaking to Julian Steward (1943:303).

Section two panels 1a-8



Owl Cave Section II, Panels 1A-8

Section 2 Panels 4-8 Overview

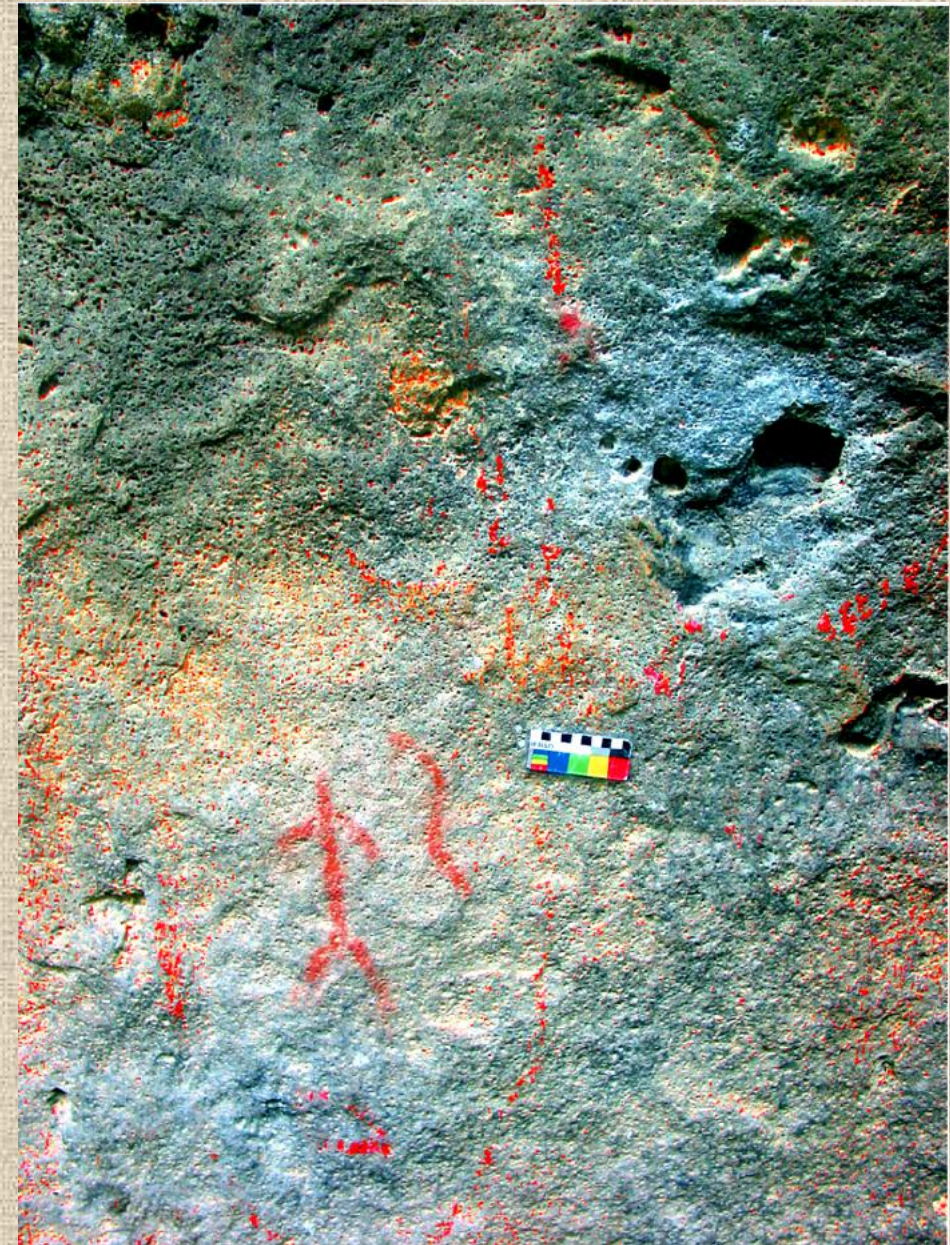
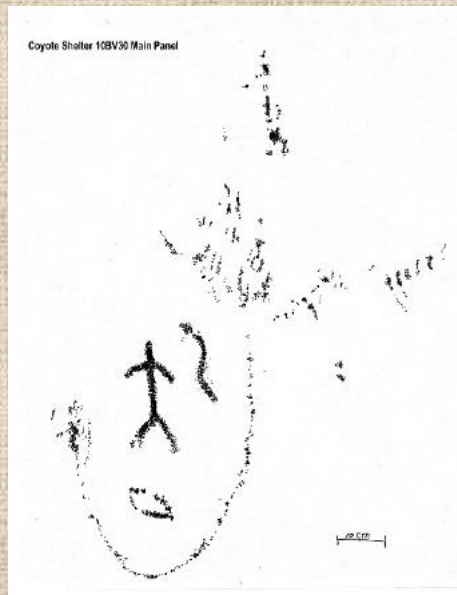


Carolynne Merrell Photo

Same panel from different angles



Coyote and DryCat caves

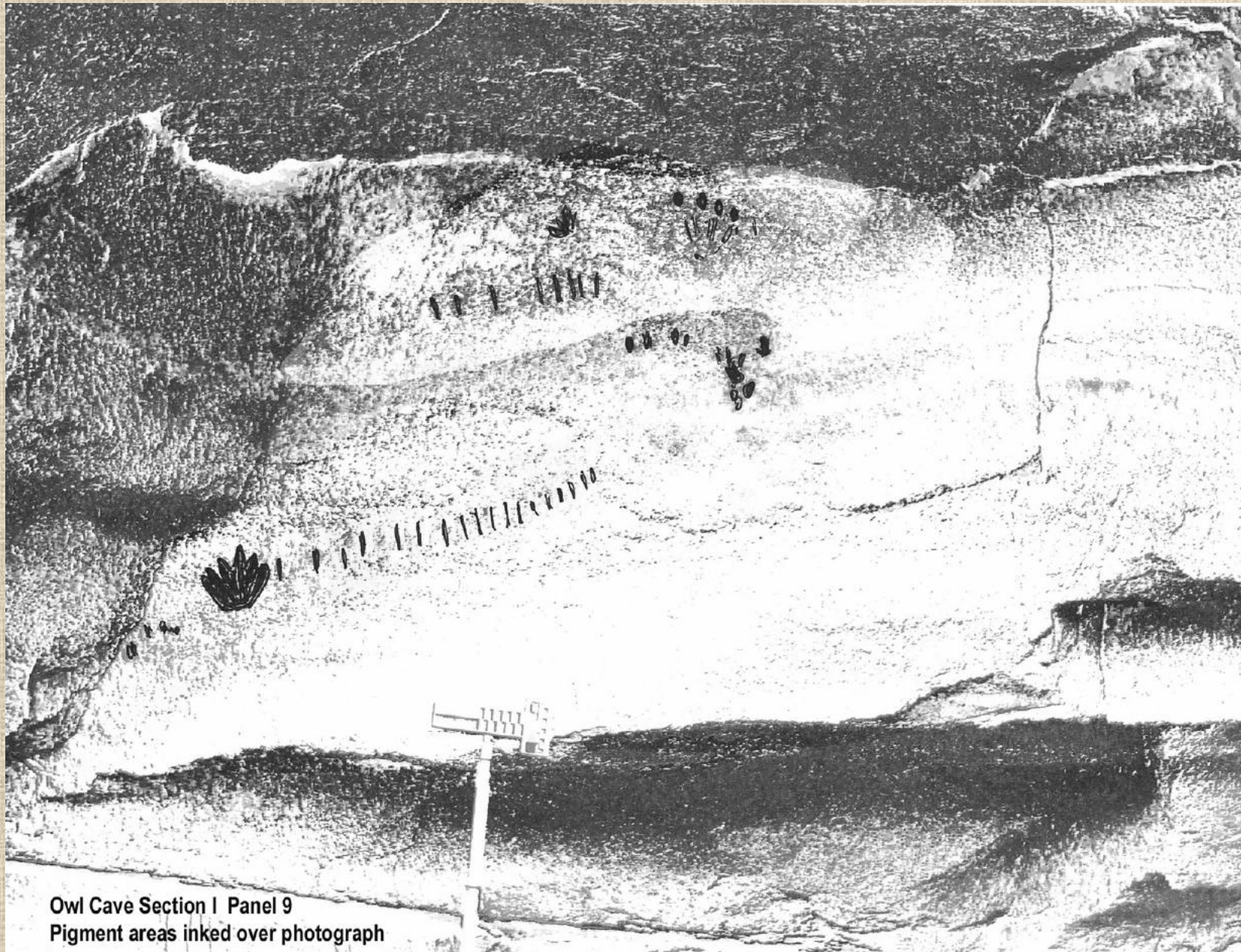


Coyote Pictograph Panel



SECTION 1 PANEL 9

This overview
Illustration was
created by
combining several
DStretch and
enhanced photos
showing tally or
line counts.



Owl Cave Section I Panel 9
Pigment areas inked over photograph

