



**ENIGMATIC PICTURES LEFT BY AN ELUSIVE PEOPLE** populate a vast, 99-square-mile area known as the Coso Rock Art District. Its petroglyphs and archeological remains make up one of America's most extensive and undisturbed prehistoric sites. A national historic landmark, it has enjoyed extraordinary protection not only because of its remoteness in the southern California desert, but by virtue of the fact that it is secure on a military site: the China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station. **THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM** has launched a new web feature, "Coso Rock Art," exploring the ancient hunting ground, describing what investigators have learned about the people who lived here for thousands of years. **THE NAVY HAS CONTRACTED MUCH OF THIS WORK,** providing expertise, equipment, and helicopters to give scientists a bird's-eye-view of the basalt and granite-strewn landscape. Highly stylized images of bighorn sheep, mysterious zigzag shapes and geometric patterns, rock cairns, and stone rings have been recorded, fueling theories of desert-dwelling sheep hunters, medicine men, and symbolism. **THOUGH MUCH OF THE LANDMARK** remains unexplored, some 20,000 rock art images have been documented. With graphics that give the online visitor a vivid impression of the landscape, "Coso Rock Art" provides insight into the district's ecosystem and geology as well as its archeological sites. **GO TO [WWW.CR.NPS.GOV/AAD/ROCKART](http://WWW.CR.NPS.GOV/AAD/ROCKART).**