

## PICTOGRAPHS IN THE FRANK CHURCH--RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS

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Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness  
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In 1978 Dr. Max Pavesic described the pictographs, or paintings on stone found in the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness area, saying:

"Another outstanding feature of Middle Fork archaeology is the nature of the rock art sites. The remains are pictographs where design elements have been applied directly to a rock facing through the use of red ocher (hematite) paints ...The rock art sites offer an incredible array of motifs and coloration [blue, white, black or red] although a detailed study of the art is lacking. The majority of the panels are associated with rockshelters and caves."

The pictographs in the Wilderness area cannot be traced directly to the Tukudika band of Northern Shoshone, for as writer P.S. Barry (1991) points out,

"...most native North Americans are skillful and subtle rhetoricians, preferring to speak obliquely of sacred matters. They would rather say that the petroglyphs and pictographs are the work of spirits, even the bluebirds that live in the rocky holes. In speaking thus they speak truly, for in symbolic language birds and spirits are the same. Both metaphors for the human spirit, and as such equivalent to the artist in his mystical transformation."

And so the remaining traces of writing on stone remain silently part of an ancient reality we can only imagine; a personal message left in trust for future generations, to be left intact and unaltered by those who pass through this mountain homeland of a proud and ancient people.

### YOUR ROLE IN PROTECTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Wilderness Archaeologists are currently working to preserve, protect and understand the prehistory of the ancient peoples who lived in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. As this prehistory is discovered and understood, they will share it with the public through educational monographs and other publications. You can help in this effort by leaving artifacts where they lie, and informing Forest Service Wilderness managers of your discovery.

Take pride in our American heritage.

Take nothing but photographs.





Pictographs are paintings of pictures. Colored mineral oxides and/or plant dyes mixed with animal fats, and/or blood applied to protective rock overhangs can exist for hundreds of years. To the Shoshone, Paiute, Bannock, and Nez Perce people, pictographs have symbolic and spiritual meanings. Pictographs found in the Salmon River Mountains are approximately 800 to 1000 years old.

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