

## Interpretive Stations

1. Welcome to Pueblo la Plata, a community where prehistoric people lived about 800 years ago.
2. People lived at Pueblo la Plata between about A.D. 1280 and 1400. At its peak, this 70+ room structure could have housed several hundred people. It appears to have been built in several stages.
3. Past vandalism exposed many of the walls, which were constructed of local volcanic rocks. The pueblo appears to be a single story high, with doorways between rooms that were entered from the roof tops via ladders.
4. This point offers an expansive view of Perry Mesa which is cut by several deep canyons, such as Silver Creek Canyon, visible to the north. This cultural landscape includes many types of archaeological sites where people farmed, hunted, collected raw materials, traded, and conducted other activities.
5. Silver Creek, the northernmost of the deep canyons cut into Perry Mesa. To the south are Baby, Perry Tank, Lousy, Larry, and Squaw Creek. Most have streams that flow during part of the year and served as water sources. Other water sources were springs and natural rock tanks that collected rainfall.
6. The prehistoric people of Perry Mesa subsisted on a variety of wild game and plant foods, in addition to farmed crops - deer, bighorn sheep, rabbits, and other game; nuts, seeds, berries, and cactus fruits.
7. An interior doorway. Families likely maintained their own "suites" of connected rooms.

8. Petroglyphs, created by using a stone as a hammer to peck designs into the dark surface of the boulder. There are thousands of these on Perry Mesa, often associated with the larger settlement or agricultural sites. Petroglyphs were likely an important means of communication, though

we don't know their specific meaning. Some may indicate ceremonial uses or certain social groups. They include abstract designs like circles, spirals, and crosses; and representations of humans, animals, and plants.

9. Everyday life at Pueblo la Plata. In addition to farming, hunting, and preparing food, the people of Perry Mesa probably also visited with and shared ceremonies and feasts with friends and relatives in the other villages. But social and economic connections went far beyond just the people of Perry Mesa. They had pottery from the Hopi Mesas, nearly 150 miles away. They used shell jewelry from the Gulf of California, had macaws from Mexico, and made stone tools of obsidian, a shiny volcanic glass from Williams and Flagstaff. And, in addition to their participation in long-distance trade networks, the people of Perry Mesa probably also had alliances with neighboring groups to aid each other in defense against enemies.

10. This large, open area was a location for daily activities such as making and repairing tools, and processing and preparing foods. Many activities took place outside, rather than within the pueblo rooms. Beyond this area, people constructed rock-bordered terraces that captured rainfall for growing crops such as corn, beans, squash and agave. Meat and some plant foods were cooked in large roasting pits. Evidence indicates that the time of the 1300s offered a relatively productive and predictable climate for farming.

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*La Plata aerial photograph by Joe Vogel*

# PUEBLO LA PLATA



## PERRY MESA AGUA FRIA NATIONAL MONUMENT

Welcome to the windswept grasslands of Perry Mesa, a nearly intact natural and cultural landscape little different from what it was during prehistoric times. The Perry Mesa Archaeological District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is made up of Perry Mesa and the much smaller Black Mesa on either side of the Agua Fria River. Come explore its cultural heritage at Pueblo La Plata!



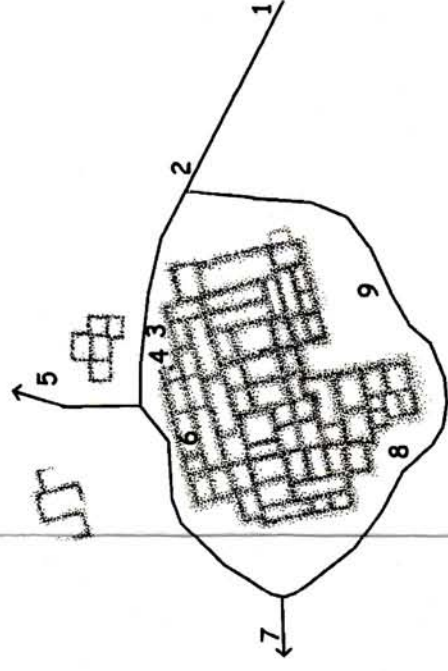
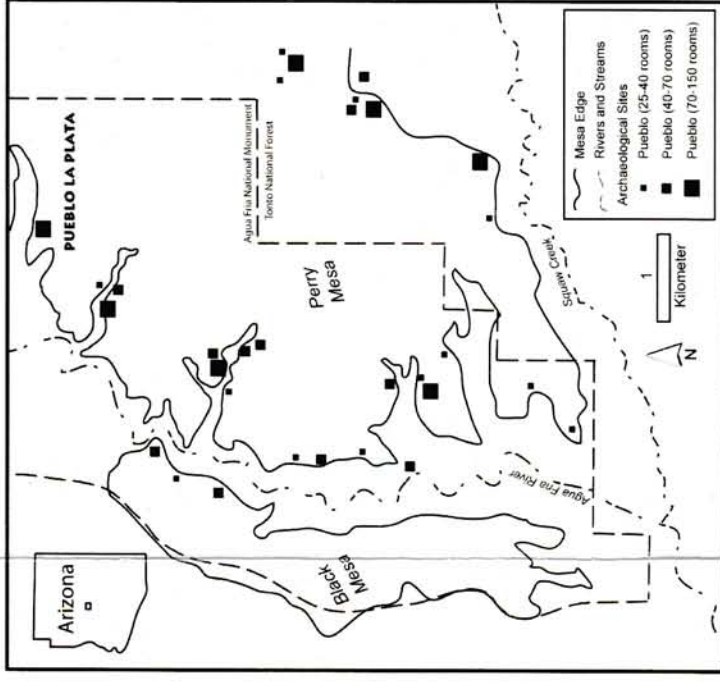
## The Perry Mesa Locality

Perry Mesa is actually a series of basalt-capped mesas and canyons along the Agua Fria River that resulted from the relatively gentle eruption of the hopefully still dormant shield volcano known today as Joe's Hill. The earliest permanent occupation of Perry Mesa itself is found on the east side in the form of several Hohokam pithouse villages that were founded as early as 750 AD. By about 1075 AD the occupation had spread all across the mesa. As the population grew, so did development of runoff control agricultural facilities - terraces on the slopes and checkdams on the small drainages - used to grow corn, agave, and other crops. The eventual result was the near total modification of large portions of the mesa top by the construction of numerous and complex field systems made up of a wide variety of runoff harvesting structures. After about 1280 AD, following an influx of new settlers during a period of great drought, at least six settlements similar to Pueblo la Plata, dominated the landscape, all located within a day's walking distance of each other and supporting as many as 3,000 people during the AD 1300s. The people in these communities were connected by social and economic relationships into what archaeologists have called the Perry Mesa Tradition.

While much of the prehistoric occupation of Perry Mesa was related to the Hohokam culture, many Native American tribes lived, passed through, and used natural resources on the mesa. They include the Yavapai, Apache, Hopi, and O'odham people, all of whom value the ancestral connections and cultural importance of this area.

Join us for a walk around the main room block at Pueblo La Plata. Along the trail you will find numbered stations on posts where you can use this brochure to learn more about its history and environment. Enjoy your visit to the past!

Please remember that this is an ancient and irreplaceable part of our shared history that has already been damaged by illegal digging and artifact collection. Take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints, and please do not stand on the walls. Help us protect this site for future generations.



## PUEBLO LA PLATA, THE MAIN ROOM BLOCK & TRAIL

To report vandalism to the site, call 1-800-637-9152