

WELCOME TO JEFFERS PETROGLYPHS

Minnesota's recorded history begins at this sacred site where Native Americans have worshipped and recorded the story of their lives in rock carvings for thousands of years. Jeffers Petroglyphs is the largest petroglyph site in the Midwest. We invite you to appreciate this awe-inspiring record of the past while enjoying the splendor of a tallgrass prairie ridge crowned by rich red rock.

WHEN SITE IS OPEN:

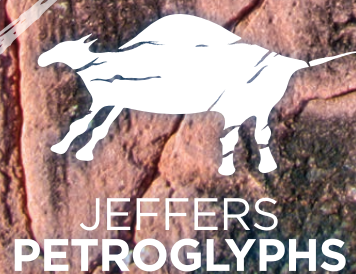
Begin your experience at the visitor center

- **View exhibits** about Native American culture and prairie ecology.
- **Shop the museum store** for locally made crafts, books, gifts, cold beverages, and snacks.
- **Daily** stationed tour experience.

WHEN SITE IS CLOSED:

- **Explore the site and trails** with this interactive visitor guide.

Learn more about Jeffers Petroglyphs and browse our calendar of events at mnhs.org.



27160 County Road 2
Comfrey, MN 56019

VISITOR GUIDE

EXPLORE THE BEAUTY, HISTORY, AND CULTURE OF THIS ANCIENT AND SACRED SITE

THE ROCK

What are petroglyphs?

Petroglyphs are images carved on a rock face. The word comes from the Greek *petra*, meaning stone, and *glyphe*, meaning carving. Some of the ancient petroglyphs found here are 7,000 years old, making Jeffers one of the oldest continuously used sacred sites in the world. How many petroglyphs are carved into the rock? More than 5,000 Native American images are carved into the Sioux quartzite outcroppings. Images of buffalo, turtles, thunderbirds, and humans tell the stories of Native American ancestors.

THE PEOPLE

Who carved the petroglyphs?

Oral histories, historical records, and archaeology tell us that this area was inhabited and visited by several tribal nations, including the Ioway, Otoe, Cheyenne, and Dakota. Native Americans continue to conduct prayers and religious ceremonies here, as their ancestors did thousands of years ago.

What do the petroglyphs mean?

The petroglyphs document Native American presence, historic events, and spiritual beliefs. Native American elders have participated in the conservation and ongoing interpretation of the petroglyphs' meaning and significance, but mysteries remain about what each glyph represents. Visit mnhs.org/jefferspetroglyphs/learn/rock for more information.

THE PRAIRIE

What plants live here?

Jeffers Petroglyphs maintains 33 acres of native prairie and more than 100 acres of restored prairie. The more than 300 species of flowers and grasses found here include prickly pear cactus, buffalo grass, cordgrass, and sedge. Much of the site showcases the big bluestem and Indian grass prairie that once covered southwestern Minnesota.

How can I help preserve Jeffers?

Please stay on roped, gravel, or mowed paths and put all litter in the garbage cans provided. Pets are not permitted on the main trail to the rock face or on the rock face. Please do not pick wildflowers or other plants or disturb the rock surfaces. Thank you for respecting this sacred site in the same way you respect your own place of worship.

JEFFERS PETROGLYPHS

COUNTY RD. 2

