Use of a Quadcopter to Document Rock Alignments and Geoglyphs

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The use of a radio-controlled DJI Phantom quadcopter with a GoPro camera has proved to be a valuable tool to help document features best seen from the air. The GoPro camera can be set for interval photography (e.g., every 5 seconds) and the fisheye image distortion can be corrected in Photoshop. This approach minimizes impact on sensitive sites by eliminating the need to walk all over them.

Phantom Quadcopter

Sears Point Area, AZ

Low Altitude "Stitched"

High Altitude

A portion of the petroglyph design depicts a line of animals going into (or already in) a keyhole-shaped trap. Perhaps the irregular curved outer line is a general "map" of the local cliff and drainages?

Blythe Intaglios

According to Mohave and Quechan tribes of the lower Colorado River area, the human figures represent Moctomix, the Creator of Earth and all life. The animal figures represent Hatalayou, one of two mountain lions/persons who helped in the Creation. In ancient times, sacred ceremonial dances were held in the area to honor the Creator of life. These intaglios are best viewed from the air.

Dyke Intaglio

The human figure with a spear in his hand, fish swimming below the water, and the sun shining above, creates a distinct image. According to Native Americans, this image may represent their Creator carved the Colorado River with his spear.

Fishman Intaglio

Under current FAA regulations, drones cannot be used commercially in US airspace.

Three Canyons National Monument Sites

With GoPro Camera