

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Tempe Butte
other names/site number Hayden Butte; "A" Mountain; Oitbad (Deadfield Mountain)

2. Location

street & number N/A not for publication
city or town Tempe vicinity
state Arizona code AZ county Maricopa code 013 zip code 85281

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national x statewide local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
Oregon SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____
Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Tempe Butte
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Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		district
1		site
	4	structure
		object
1	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion: Petroglyph Site

Domestic: Hohokam Village Site

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation: Hiking Trail (non-contributing)

Sports Facility: Football Stadium (non-contributing)

Industry: Water Tanks (non-contributing)

Industry: Radio Antennas (non-contributing)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Earth

walls: N/A

roof: N/A

other: N/A

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Tempe Butte, an andesitic geographical formation, is a prominent prehistorically and historically significant landmark in downtown Tempe, Arizona. It is flanked by the Salt River and Tempe Town Lake on the north, Arizona State University's Tempe campus on the south and east, and downtown Tempe on the west. The butte rises from the valley floor beginning at the 1,180 foot contour level, reaches a maximum elevation of 1,496 feet, and covers approximately 59 acres.¹ Despite being surrounded by an urban setting, the butte itself continues to exhibit the unique natural vegetative features of the Arizona desert much as it would have in prehistoric times. The butte exhibits strong evidence of prehistoric Native American inhabitation (specifically the Hohokam tradition or culture) through the presence of petroglyphs and other culturally relevant prehistoric materials. These features, because they are in such a remarkable state of preservation, serve to exemplify several aspects of prehistoric integrity for the site despite modern inhabitation in the vicinity. The butte, as a permanent geographical formation, maintains integrity of location and setting, and through the presence of petroglyphs and other prehistoric relics exemplifies a high level of cultural feeling and association.

Narrative Description

Tempe Butte is situated in the arid Sonoran Desert of central Arizona, an environment in which the prehistoric Hohokam thrived. This dry climate has allowed for a remarkably high level of preservation for prehistoric remains on the butte. Soil erosion and other natural phenomenon detrimental to preservation occur only at a minimum.

The butte, in its modern environment, is surrounded up to its base by the City of Tempe and Arizona State University (ASU). While modern development has changed the surrounding landscape, the butte itself, as a geographical feature protected by its steep topography as well as its listing on the Tempe Historic Property Register, is mostly devoid of development and thus maintains its feeling and integrity. Some minor structures of modern origin were installed in the first half of the twentieth century, namely two water tanks, a concrete letter "A" (for ASU), and several small radio antennas at the summit. However, these structures have not significantly intruded upon any archaeologically sensitive areas on the butte's surface, and the prehistoric features, especially the petroglyphs, remain largely intact. The existence of a walking trail to the top of the butte has resulted in modern foot traffic, which is fortunately limited to this trail by local laws and regulations in order that vandalism can be kept to a minimum. The preservation of Tempe Butte thus remains an important, worthy endeavor to insure that its high level of historical and cultural integrity can be maintained and preserved for future generations.

Tempe Butte is perhaps most significant for its close cultural affiliation with the prehistoric Hohokam and the modern Four Southern Tribes of Arizona (consisting of the Gila River Indian Community; Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community; Ak-Chin Indian Community; and the Tohono O'odham Nation), respectively. The Hohokam were a sedentary agricultural people who flourished in the central desert regions of Arizona for a period of over 1,000 years.² They continuously inhabited the region until about 1450 A.D., and their population in the Salt River Valley is believed to have been between 50,000 and 100,000 individuals during the peak of their residency.

¹ <http://www.tempe.gov/historicpres/RFP-Figure1180%20Butte.jpg>

² Emil Haury, *Prehistory of the American Southwest*, pp. 446-447.

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It should be noted that the term *Hohokam* is a name given to these prehistoric Native Americans by modern archaeologists, a corruption of the Native American term *huhugam*.³ The term *huhugam* "specifically applies to past human life and not objects," intending to describe a state of being rather than a specific people.⁴ "In the O'odham traditional view," writes Barnaby Lewis, tribal historic preservation officer for the Gila River Indian Community, "*huhugam* is used in referring to O'odham ancestors as identifying person(s) from whom an individual(s) are lineal descendents."⁵ Modern Native Americans of the Four Southern Tribes view the Hohokam as a tradition and culture, and do not identify a "Hohokam people."⁶ Modern oral histories of the O'odham "identify *huhugam* as the ancestral relatives of the present day O'odham, and that knowledge is essentially the core of O'odham cultural identity," explains Lewis. He further explains: "It may be best for the public to recognize that *Huhugam* and *Hohokam* are both in union as one in a spiritual realm of the past."⁷ For ease of understanding, the term *Hohokam* will be used throughout this narrative in describing the ancient Native American culture and tradition that inhabited central Arizona and which is today manifested in the Four Southern Tribes.

Hohokam inhabitation of central Arizona is marked by several distinct periods. Their origin in the region remains an object of debate, but it is generally agreed upon that the Hohokam culture "became a recognizable entity in the river valleys of central and southern Arizona" sometime around 100 A.D.⁸ The first period of Hohokam ascendancy, beginning between around 1 A.D. and extending through about 750 A.D., was characterized by a settled, agriculturally-based people and is referred to as the Pioneer Period. The transition from the Pioneer Period is marked by the widespread development of canal-type irrigation and population growth in the Salt and Gila River valleys. These transition periods are known as the Colonial and the Sedentary. The Colonial Period lasted from about 750 A.D. until about 950 A.D. and is characterized by the introduction of ball courts, increased trade with distant communities, and the emergence of red-on-buff pottery. This period also represents a time of great expansion in the number, size, type, and complexity of Hohokam sites in the Gila and Salt River Valleys, likely related to a corresponding expansion of canal systems.⁹ The Sedentary Period began about 950 A.D. and continued until approximately 1150 A.D. Important components of the Sedentary include the mass production of red-on-buff pottery wares and their ceramic motifs, along with a continuing increase in social complexity. The construction of large adobe compounds, or platform mounds, along with "big houses" (sometimes three to four stories in height) represents a defining characteristic of the Classic Period (1150 A.D. - 1450 A.D.) This period was also denoted by the continued expansion of sophisticated canal irrigation, extensive use of red-ware potteries and polychrome ceramics and new levels of social and economic complexity.¹⁰ During the final phases of the Classic Period, beginning around 1400 A.D., settlement patterns along the Salt River underwent drastic, permanent changes, possibly owing to climatic and environmental factors. These several distinct periods within Hohokam history represent the role of social scaling in their society, which resulted in an increasing complexity of their habitation sites and irrigation techniques.

Sociopolitical and environmental factors are believed to have played a dual role in the gradual transition of the Hohokam, a transition which became manifest in the late Classic Period. Changing rainfall patterns in the fifteenth century are believed to have played a significant part in the Hohokam transformation. These rainfall patterns would have significantly altered the flow of water in the Salt and Gila Rivers, the lifeblood of Hohokam agriculture and irrigation.¹¹ Haury has hypothesized that such changing patterns would have resulted in "water logging and salt concentrations in the fields due to over

³ Donald Bahr, "Tribal Perspectives on the Hohokam," *Old Pueblo Archaeology No. 60, December, 2009*, p. 1.

⁴ *Huhugam* is loosely translated as meaning "ancestors who have gone away." (Barnaby Lewis, Interview with the Author, July 21, 2010.)

⁵ Barnaby Lewis, *Pieces of the Puzzle: O'odham Perspective on 'Huhugam'*, Unpublished MS, p.1.

⁶ Barnaby Lewis, Interview with the Author, July 21, 2010.

⁷ Lewis, *Pieces of the Puzzle*, p. 1.

⁸ Thomas E. Wright & Scott M. Kwiatkowski, *Tempe (Hayden) Butte & Environs Archaeological & Cultural Resource Study*, p. 12.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15; John P. Andrews, *Desert Farmers at the River's Edge: The Hohokam and Pueblo Grande*, p. 5.

¹¹ Dean Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

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irrigation, thereby making the soil unfit for cultivation."¹² While this assertion may have been true in some instances, more recent archaeological work in the Salt River Valley has indicated that periods of drought followed by extensive flooding caused the canals to fill with silt; such flooding also likely altered the elevation of the riverbed, which in turn would have rendered irrigation head gates useless.¹³ A continuance in this pattern over many years might plausibly have led to a decline in the agriculturally-based society.¹⁴

As a result of these events, the Hohokam tradition that dominated the Sonoran deserts of central Arizona began to materially alter beginning around 1300-1350 A.D., necessarily adapting to the changing surroundings. Numerous theories have been advanced concerning what exactly transpired among the Hohokam culture; some of these theories suggest a partial migration to outlying areas and subsequent assimilation with other native peoples. Analysis of native oral traditions and comparisons with archaeological evidence has produced considerable substantiation of this theory. Today, the Four Southern Tribes of Arizona have been shown through oral histories and traditions to be descendents of the Hohokam.¹⁵ Oral traditions among the modern O'odham, while varying in certain details, almost unanimously suggest a direct affiliation with the ancient Hohokam. "The most detailed versions that have been recorded," writes archaeologist Lynn Teague, "reconcile these [variants] by stating that the O'odham are the descendants of both the original Hohokam inhabitants of the area and newcomers."¹⁶ Additionally, much of the content of such O'odham oral histories has been supported by archaeological data.

The period beginning around 1450 A.D. and extending into the modern historical era is one of relative ambiguity. Little has been discovered by archaeologists relative to Native American inhabitation in the Salt River Valley during this period, making it evident that a drastic change in Hohokam culture did indeed occur. Spanish explorers encountered Native Americans in the vicinity of Tucson and as far north as the Gila River prior to 1700, but the Phoenix area appears to have been mostly deserted during that time. Some archaeologists have postulated that the Salt River might have served as "a buffer zone between the agricultural Piman groups to the south and the west, and the hunting-and-gathering Yavapai and Apache groups to the north and east."¹⁷

Tempe Butte is a highly significant prehistoric site because of its proximity and relationship to large villages that have been archaeologically attributed to the Hohokam. The butte itself bears widespread evidence of Hohokam inhabitation in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, archaeological investigations on the butte have revealed the presence of a large concentration of shallow depressions related to Hohokam agriculture, a variety of scattered prehistoric artifacts, and, most significantly, an incredible concentration of petroglyphs. In addition to these physical remnants of the past, another important component of the butte is its relationship to the Hohokam as an icon of their civilization.

The presence of Native American artifact concentrations on the slopes of Tempe Butte has been noted by visitors throughout the modern era. While these cultural resources are no longer as abundant as they once were, due in large part to 140 years of continuous modern inhabitation in the surrounding vicinity, there are nevertheless artifact remnants still to be discovered and interpreted. Any visitor to the butte, if looking closely enough, will encounter scattered pottery sherds, over 500 petroglyphs, and other scattered remnants of the once prominent Hohokam culture.¹⁸ It is important that these remaining prehistoric cultural resources be protected from further disturbance and deterioration so that they may continue to be enjoyed by generations to come.

¹² Haury, op. cit., p. 450.

¹³ Thomas Wright, Interview with the Author, July 21, 2010.

¹⁴ Bob Gasser, Interview with the Author, January 26, 2010.

¹⁵ Lynn S. Teague, "Prehistory and the Traditions of the O'odham and Hopi," *The Kiva* 58(4), p. 447.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 438.

¹⁷ Wright & Kwiatkowski, *Tempe (Hayden) Butte and Environs*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Barbara Macnider, *Cultural Resources Overview for the Papago Park Planning Area*, p. 23.

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Perhaps even more significant than the presence of physical depressions/foundations and scattered artifacts on the butte is the large array of petroglyphs to be found there. While there are some 550 documented Hohokam rock art sites in Arizona, Tempe Butte is distinguished for its unusually large and dense concentration of petroglyphs. Indeed, its geologic composition proved highly conducive to petroglyph production. Composed primarily of exposed volcanic rocks with relatively smooth faces and dark natural patinas, it was easy for nearby native inhabitants to "peck" designs into these geologic formations and for those designs to be highly visible. The petroglyphs are found in three distinct settings on the butte: on outcrops of andesitic rock; on the surfaces of cap rock near the top of the butte; and on various miscellaneous rock outcrops across the butte.¹⁹

The petroglyphs on Tempe Butte are directly associated with the Colonial, Sedentary and Classic Periods of Hohokam history, specifically the era spanning about 700-1450 A.D. Numerous archaeological excavations in the areas immediately surrounding the butte, as well as throughout the extent of the Salt River valley, have confirmed the association with this time period. For example, the large-scale architecture (platform mounds) which is characteristic of the Classic Period has been predominant in archaeological investigations at the base of the butte. Indeed, one important Hohokam village in the valley, known to archaeologists as *La Plaza Tempe*, was located at the eastern and southern bases of the butte and covered more than a square mile on the southern flank of the Salt River. *La Plaza* rivaled other nearby villages, namely Mesa Grande and Pueblo Grande (the former a National Register listed property and the latter a National Historic Landmark) for its architectural and agricultural sophistication.

Inasmuch as interpretation of Tempe Butte's petroglyphs is concerned, studies conducted of other Hohokam sites in the Salt River valley have revealed that rock art formations occur with much greater regularity in areas where villages and irrigation canals were once located. This indicates a correlation between permanent Hohokam farming villages and the petroglyphs.²⁰ Indeed, the butte marks the only location in the Salt River Valley where natural bedrock occurs near the river's surface. This has the effect of forcing river water to the surface at that location, a phenomenon which has traditionally been highly conducive to the placement of headgates for irrigation farming.²¹

Several scholars have identified a likely use of the petroglyphs for ceremonial and calendrical purposes, a testament to the paramount importance of the butte as an icon to the Hohokam. Some petroglyphs on the butte are known to have served as markers of important seasonal events, namely the solstices and equinoxes, thus aiding the people in identifying the planting and harvesting seasons as well as the appropriate times for ceremonies.

The Loendorfs, when examining the Tempe Butte petroglyphs in 1995, wrote, "If petroglyph calendars were used for scheduling communal ceremonies...there should be a greater number of these petroglyphs in the vicinity of the sedentary villages. The location of Tempe Butte adjacent to major canals, irrigated fields, and permanent villages is precisely where we should predict the need for calendars, while the petroglyph sites in the mountains, near temporary camps, are less likely locations for ceremonies scheduled according to calendars."²² These petroglyphs served as markers and "reminders" for the Hohokam of important events, including not only planting seasons but also ceremonial practices.

Because of its association with the demarcation of the changing seasons and ceremonial events, as well as its actual physical presence, the butte represented a significant symbol in prehistoric Hohokam tradition. It possessed a commanding, imposing presence as a visible landmark throughout the Salt River Valley. Specifically, it marked the location of the only hard-rock crossing of that river in the entire valley. As such, the area surrounding the butte was ideal for inhabitation and cultivation; indeed, archaeologists have pointed out that this bedrock river crossing, which served the dual purpose of

¹⁹ Loendorf and Loendorf, *With Zig-Zag Lines I'm Painted: Hohokam Petroglyphs on Tempe Butte*, p. 13.

²⁰ Polly Schaafsma, *Indian Rock Art in the Southwest*, p. 97.

²¹ Dr. David Jacobs, Interview with the Author, January 28, 2010; Tom Wright, Interview with the Author, February 17, 2010.

²² Loendorf and Loendorf, op. cit., pp. 135-136.

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forcing underground river water to the surface, was the location of head gates for irrigation canals that funneled water to many surrounding Hohokam villages.²³

Tempe Butte had a multitude of uses for the Hohokam. It served as an important, omnipresent icon for their culture and demarcated the location of one of their large and complex villages, known as *La Plaza*. It also served as a marker for the only occurrence in the Salt River Valley of natural bedrock near the surface, which provided a convenient river crossing and had the additional function of being conducive to irrigation farming. Finally, the butte's surface contains innumerable physical evidences of Hohokam use during the period 700-1450 A.D. Hundreds of petroglyphs can be found scattered across the butte's rocky surface, many of which serve the highly important function of a prehistoric calendar marking solar events. These petroglyphs thus served as reminders for the Hohokam of the appropriate planting seasons and times for ceremonies. In modern times, local Native American peoples continue to observe the butte as an important cultural landmark and recognize the butte's iconography in their own ceremonial practices. In all of these areas Tempe Butte reflects a remarkably high level of cultural importance and archaeological integrity.

²³ Tom Wright, Interview with the Author, July 21, 2010.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Archaeology: Prehistoric (Hohokam)

Archaeology: Prehistoric (Petroglyphs)

Art (Petroglyphs)

Period of Significance

700 A.D. – 1450 A.D.

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Hohokam

Four Southern Tribes of Arizona

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Period of Significance (justification)

The petroglyphs on Tempe Butte display a direct cultural affiliation with the Hohokam, a native tradition and culture that flourished in the Gila and Salt River valleys from approximately 1 A.D. until 1450 A.D. These broad dates have been established by archaeologists after innumerable excavations of Hohokam sites. However, the more precise dates of 700 A.D. - 1450 A.D. have been fixed for the villages at the base of Tempe Butte as well as for the petroglyphs that cover the butte's surface. This time frame is based upon archaeological evidence compiled from excavations in the immediate vicinity of the butte. Most notably, many of the petroglyph designs bear close similarities with designs found on pottery sherds that have been excavated at sites dating specifically to the Colonial, Sedentary and Classic Periods of the Hohokam, or approximately 700-1450 A.D. It has been the general consensus of archaeologists and anthropologists that the Tempe Butte petroglyphs date to this period.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Tempe Butte is identified as being eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion 'C' and 'D'. The rock art found on the butte represents the distinctive style of the Hohokam, known as the Gila Petroglyph style. Within this style, the petroglyphs on Tempe Butte more specifically depict the unique regional characteristics of the Gila/Salt drainages. In addition to its eligibility under Criteria 'C' as an embodiment of this unique style of ancient art, the Tempe Butte environs are also eligible under Criteria 'D,' as they have continuously yielded in the past, and will doubtless continue to reveal in the future, valuable information relative to the life-ways of not only the prehistoric Hohokam of central Arizona, but the modern Four Southern Tribes as well. Archaeological investigations on and around Tempe Butte began in the late nineteenth century and have continued into the modern era. Archaeologists, through their work on and around the butte, continue to gain additional insight into the important Hohokam culture. Specifically, the site yields information relative to Hohokam ceremonial practices and agricultural undertakings in relationship to material culture, iconography, and solar events (as expressed through petroglyphs). Previous archaeological investigations of village sites at the base of the butte have served to contextualize the prominent prehistoric features of the butte with the Hohokam culture. Tempe Butte, because of its unique archaeological features, exemplifies its prominence and significance to the Hohokam during the period 700-1450 A.D. and its continued important role as a cultural icon for modern descendants of the Hohokam in the Salt River Valley and vicinity. Refined scientific techniques may someday allow for the precise dating of petroglyphs and other Hohokam-related features on the butte, thus presenting a further potential for the advancement of archaeological and anthropological knowledge.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Archaeologists have taken a strong interest in Tempe Butte and its surrounding environs since the late nineteenth century. It was identified early on as a site of profound archaeological significance, and indeed has continued to yield valuable insight into prehistoric Hohokam tradition and culture. This is especially true inasmuch as the study of rock art is concerned; Tempe Butte, through its array of unique rock art designs, embodies the distinctive regional characteristics of the Gila Petroglyph style associated with the ancient Hohokam; the discoveries of archaeologists during excavations on and around the butte have served to contextualize this distinctive style.

The largest Hohokam village at the butte is known to archaeologists as *La Plaza* and spanned approximately one and one-half miles along the Salt River's southern banks, extending to the base of Tempe Butte. In addition to *La Plaza*, archaeologists have identified four additional Hohokam habitation sites at the base of Tempe Butte. These include: Mesa 1:4; Mesa 1:5; Mesa 1:9; and Terraced Butte.^{xxiv} These sites were first scientifically examined by archaeologist Frank Midvale of the Gila Pueblo Archaeological Foundation in 1928; subsequent investigations have confirmed their existence.^{xxv} It was by the hands of the inhabitants of these five locations that the innumerable petroglyphs on Tempe Butte were created.

The petroglyphs on Tempe Butte were first noted in the historical record by famed southwestern explorer Frank Hamilton Cushing, who visited the site in 1887 under the auspices of the Hemenway Southwestern Archaeological Expedition. In his diary entry of February 23, 1887, Cushing noted, "On nearing the top we found that...the surrounding rocks...were covered with pictographs. Amongst these it was interesting to note the characteristic dragonfly symbol of summer rains, the zigzag lightning serpent, the whirlwind symbol or volute, representations of the mountain sheep, of lizards, [and] dance-figures..."^{xxvi}

A more comprehensive study and inventory of these petroglyphs, conducted in 1995, revealed thirty-one outcrops of petroglyph concentrations containing a total of 232 individual rock art panels.^{xxvii} Such a large concentration of petroglyphs in so limited a geographical space is rare in Arizona; indeed, only a handful of Hohokam petroglyph sites can boast of such an extensive, diversified collection of rock art. There are more than 550 Hohokam rock art sites in Arizona, of which few compare in scale and significance to Tempe Butte. One highly comparable occurrence of Hohokam rock art in Arizona is Painted Rocks Petroglyph Site, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on November 25, 1977. Other well-known rock art sites in central Arizona include South Mountain Park (an archaeological study of which was published by Todd Bostwick and Peter Krocek in 2002), and the Deer Valley/Hedgpeth Hills Rock Art Site, which is listed on the National Register.

Archaeologist Henry Wallace, analyzing Hohokam rock art at central Arizona sites, identifies six specific functions of these petroglyphs: doodling/graffiti, mnemonic devices, clan symbols, decoration, trail/boundary markers, and ceremonial/religious purposes.^{xxviii} The rock art contained within the geographical boundaries of Tempe Butte is highly varied in its forms and is representative of several of these functions. Petroglyph formations on the butte include anthropomorphs in varying degrees of detail, animal figures, as well as geometric shapes and spirals. Each of these respective features has its own purpose within the overall context of Hohokam art.

The rock art on Tempe Butte embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Gila Petroglyph style, an art form which is most directly associated with the Hohokam of central Arizona. The Gila style is typified by both representational and abstract designs

^{xxiv} Kwiatkowski, Wright & Solliday, op. cit., p. 7.

^{xxv} Ibid., p. 13.

^{xxvi} Curtis M. Hinsley & David R. Wilcox, *Lost Itinerary of Frank Hamilton Cushing*, p. 171.

^{xxvii} Loendorf & Loendorf, op. cit., p. 11.

^{xxviii} Todd Bostwick & Peter Krocek, *Hohokam Rock Art at South Mountain Park*, p. 24.

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"applied to the rock in a seemingly haphazard way."^{xxix} Among these representational and abstract depictions there exists a varying degree of technical quality. Petroglyphs in the Gila style range from haphazardly pecked line drawings to complex, meticulously designed geometric shapes and life-forms.^{xxx} (See photos 1-3).

The various life-forms depicted in Hohokam petroglyphs include "a variety of human figures, large game animals, and perhaps dogs. Quadrupeds are pictured as stick figures and as more solid forms.... As in pottery designs, the heads of Hohokam petroglyph quadrupeds have pointed noses and prominent ears, which together define a V shape."^{xxxi} With few exceptions, all Hohokam rock art sites in Arizona feature depictions of anthropomorphs, or human-like figures. "The details of stick figure anthropomorphs are diverse," writes one archaeologist, "depicting a range of different headdresses, facial features, hands, and postures."^{xxxii}

Inasmuch as depictions of life-forms are concerned, the rock art on Tempe Butte represents a prime example of the regional variations within the Gila Petroglyph style. Hohokam art found on Tempe Butte, located in the region of the Gila-Salt drainages, is differentiated from Hohokam art found in the more southerly Tucson region, primarily by the increased occurrence of these life-forms. "There is a greater emphasis on the depiction of men, animals, birds and reptiles, especially lizards and snakes, in the Salt and Gila drainages," writes Schaafsma. Additionally, these features tend to be more carefully defined in the Salt and Gila River region than in the Tucson region, where "abstract designs predominate over representational elements, and the latter are less distinctive than those occurring in the Gila-Salt drainages."^{xxxiii}

Another distinctive feature of the Gila Petroglyph style is the abundance of circular and spiral designs, as well as the 'pipette' motif. These appear with much greater regularity in Hohokam petroglyphs than those of other southwestern peoples. Spirals "may appear in several contexts," writes Schaafsma; "they may appear singly, they are sometimes elaborated with ticking, and they may be incorporated into larger design complexes and abstract compositions."^{xxxiv} The pipette motifs are described as being "bilaterally symmetrical, lobed figures [and] are believed to date to the Classic period (A.D. 1150-1450)."^{xxxv} There are variations of the pipette motif, with some of them having dots and/or circles between the lobes.^{xxxvi} All three of the above features, circular and spiral designs, along with the pipette motif can be found on Tempe Butte (See Photos 18-19).

The geometric images predominant throughout the Tempe Butte petroglyph array bear more significance than one might initially suppose. The images, of which spirals are the most common, "may have originated as entopic forms [and] become embedded into an artistic tradition and acquired layers of meaning specific to that culture. Hence, simple geometric designs become symbols representing complex abstract concepts."^{xxxvii} Additionally, such abstract geometric designs have frequently been related to shamanism and altered states of consciousness, representing an added layer of cultural significance. Finally, while the exact meanings of many of these spiral designs remain ambiguous, many scholars have noted the similarities between these designs and those of Mesoamerican peoples, suggesting a possible correlation between Mesoamerican native peoples and the Hohokam.^{xxxviii}

^{xxix} Loendorf & Loendorf, op. cit., p. 2.

^{xxx} Schaafsma, op. cit., p. 83. There is some evidence that the more crude scratched designs predate the well-formed pecked designs. Some scholars identify this as a separate style, the Hohokam Scratched Petroglyph Style, and describe it as consisting of lines simply scratched onto rock faces. Alan Ferg discovered that some of the scratched designs actually underlay the pecked designs, proving them to be from an older period. (J. Homer Thiel, *Rock Art in Arizona*, pp. 78-80).

^{xxxi} Ibid.

^{xxxii} Bostwick & Krocek, op. cit., p. 103.

^{xxxiii} Schaafsma, p. 91.

^{xxxiv} Ibid., p. 90.

^{xxxv} Thiel, op. cit., p. 76.

^{xxxvi} There have been 59 documented occurrences of this pipette motif in and around the Salt and Gila drainages, a region to which the motif is almost unique (it occurs on only a couple of rare occasions elsewhere in outlying areas). (Ibid).

^{xxxvii} Bostwick & Krocek, p. 26.

^{xxxviii} Schaafsma, p. 90.

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The petroglyphs serve as a modern-day reminder of the important function of the butte as a prehistoric Hohokam entity. The petroglyphs were especially important in marking solar events such as the solstice and equinox. This was extremely vital to the Hohokam; in the harsh desert environment in which they farmed for subsistence, it was imperative that they maintain a reliable timing mechanism to determine their planting seasons. Several of the petroglyphs on Tempe Butte served this function. In particular, the northern slope of the butte is the location of a unique petroglyph that, to this day, accurately marks the equinox. At this location there can be seen a petroglyph of a snake, and, only a few feet away, a rock formation casts a shadow nearly identical to this snake glyph at sunset on two days of the year - the equinoxes in March and September.^{xxxix}

The presence of additional calendrical rock art on the butte is attested to by Bostwick and Krocek in their study of Hohokam petroglyphs. They specifically mention "a southwest-facing spiral pecked on Tempe Butte...marked by a distinct triangle of light during the summer solstice solar zenith."^{xi} (See photos 9, 15-17). Similar observations have been made of Hohokam petroglyphs at nearby South Mountain, revealing intentional solar interactions during both winter and summer solstices.^{xi}

In modern times, the importance of timing mechanisms remains important for local Native American peoples who are descendants of the Hohokam. Tempe Butte remains a highly revered cultural landmark for these peoples, most notably the Four Southern Tribes, who continue to practice ceremonies on the butte at certain times of the year. One tribal member, in reference to the petroglyphs as a device for timing the planting and ceremonial seasons, notes that, "It was important for them, and still is for us, that these ceremonies be conducted at precisely the right time. You have to be sharp and keen on your timing."^{xiii} The petroglyphs and their direct correlation to tribal ceremonies reveal a link with the Hohokam over centuries and a unique bond between those ancient peoples and the modern Four Southern Tribes. Indeed, modern songs and ceremonies are specifically intended to remind the people of these tribes of the significance of *Oitbad* (Tempe Butte) and their social connection with that location.^{xiiii}

Another important linkage between the ancient Hohokam and the modern Four Southern Tribes, identified in 1908 by Frank Russell, pertains to the existence of three classes of medicine men among the modern tribes. The class having the most direct relationship with Tempe Butte was called the *Ma'gai*, who had power over crops and the weather. "These...were the true rulers of the tribe," writes Russell, "as their influence was much greater than that of the chiefs."^{xliv} Because the *Ma'gai* could exercise control over weather and crops, their power was far more important than any political influence exercised by the chiefs.^{xlv} This important group of people among the Four Southern Tribes was likely derived from the Hohokam, from whom they are descended. Weather patterns in the arid central-Arizona environment were paramount to the survival of the Hohokam, as their crop cycles depended on the presence of both rain and river water for irrigation in their canal systems. Landforms such as Tempe Butte correlate with the visible presence of water in the river, provide ideal locations for canal headgates, and influence where storm clouds will drop their rain. Certain petroglyphs on Tempe Butte are representative of the work of these weather-controlling medicine men among the ancient Hohokam, acting to predict certain weather phenomenon and the changing of the seasons in order to indicate the appropriate times for planting and harvesting nearby crops.^{xlvi} (See Photos 20-22). These petroglyphs thus allowed the ancient Hohokam to be, as noted above, "sharp and keen" on their timing, an aspect of culture that originated with the Hohokam and which is today perpetuated through the Four Southern Tribes in song and ceremony.

The various shapes and features appearing on the Tempe Butte petroglyphs also appear abundantly on pottery sherds found both on the slopes of the butte and at Hohokam villages

^{xxxix} Dr. David Jacobs, Interview with the Author, January 28, 2010.

^{xi} Bostwick & Krocek, op. cit., p. 178.

^{xli} Ibid., p. 203.

^{xlii} Shane Anton, Interview with the Author, February 17, 2010.

^{xliii} Barnaby Lewis, Interview with the Author, July 21, 2010.

^{xliv} Frank Russell, *The Pima Indians*, p. 256.

^{xlv} Ibid., pp. 256-257.

^{xlvi} David Jacobs Interview, June 30, 2010.

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at the base of the mountain. These similarities in design have been noted by numerous scholars of Hohokam tradition.^{xlvii} Because scientific dating methods have yet to be applied to the petroglyphs on Tempe Butte, this is the most widely accepted technique of dating this rock art to the same time period from whence the innumerable pottery sherds found nearby have come, namely, the late Sedentary and early Classic periods.^{xlviii}

The aforementioned Terraced Butte Site, located on the north slope of Tempe Butte, consists of numerous shallow depressions, believed to be agricultural features, which are associated with Hohokam residency in the vicinity. First recorded by Frank Midvale in 1928, Terraced Butte was revisited in the late 1990s by Scott Kwiatkowski and Thomas Wright of Archaeological Research Services (ARS), a Tempe-based firm. Their field work confirmed the presence of these physical features on the butte, noting that they were no longer as visible as they were when visited by Midvale in 1928. ARS described the Terraced Butte site as "a series of...shallow depressions...on the northwest flank of the butte. The depressions average approximately 1.5 meters long, 0.75 meters wide, and 0.30 meters deep. These...are thought to be prehistoric agricultural features." In addition to the presence of these prehistoric depressions, it was also noted in one archaeological investigation that the immediate surrounding area "exhibited the highest diversity of prehistoric artifacts in the project area."^{xlix} The existence of subsurface prehistoric artifacts in this area, as evidenced by the ARS studies, provides a continuing opportunity for discovery and advancement of archaeological knowledge at this location.

The Terraced Butte feature has been further described as consisting of a cluster of some 20 depressions on the butte's surface, which without a doubt refers to the same shallow depressions noted by prior archaeologists visiting the site. A 1997 study by ARS noted that "traces of terracing cover the entire slope."¹ The Terraced Butte site is significant as a physical prehistoric entity on the surface of Tempe Butte. Despite continued erosion due to weather and occasional foot traffic, the depressions remain identifiable to the attentive eye, surviving as a vestige of Hohokam inhabitation at Tempe Butte from 700-1450 A.D.

For the people living at the *La Plaza* village site, the butte served as one of their single most predominant physical icons, a centerpiece of their prehistoric community. The *La Plaza* village, in terms of its cultural identity, relied heavily upon the presence of the butte. It was an omnipresent component of their lives, visible at all times from any location in the vicinity. The inverse was also true; the butte served as a vantage point from which Hohokam surroundings could be viewed. As such, its prehistoric significance extended far beyond its mere existence as a geological formation.

The butte's visibility from all directions remains an integral component of its significance to this day, and indeed is an aspect of integrity which remains entirely intact. The butte denoted the location of a hard-rock crossing of the Salt River, and thus marked an important transportation corridor in ancient times as well as modern times. It has served an omnipresent function as a cultural landmark and icon for native peoples and continues to reveal their strong feeling of association with the natural environment and landscape. Even in the modern era the butte remains a culturally important icon for nearby native people descendant from the Hohokam. As a geographical entity that is "sacred in song and ceremony" to the Four Southern Tribes, Tempe Butte has managed to retain its integrity as a culturally relevant landmark even in modern times. It remains a component of local Native American peoples' "total landscape," regardless of modern activity in the surrounding area.¹¹

Tempe Butte has served a valuable function for native people of central Arizona for centuries. The Hohokam, during the period 700-1450 A.D., inhabited the immediate surrounding areas of the butte, engaging in widespread irrigation agriculture and utilizing the butte's physical characteristics in relation to the sun in order to mark important solar events. The butte thus served a practical and indispensable purpose as a

^{xlvii} See, for example, Emil Haury, *The Stratigraphy and Archaeology of Ventana Cave*, p. 547 or Bostwick & Krocek, op. cit., p. 17.

^{xlviii} Loendorf & Loendorf, op. cit., p. 13.

^{xlix} Ibid.

¹ Kwiatkowski, Wright & Solliday, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

¹¹ Shane Anton, Interview with the Author, February 17, 2010.

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calendar for prehistoric Native Americans in the Salt River Valley. It served as a defining component of their total landscape, marking the location of their village and irrigation district and providing a sense of geographical identity for the inhabitants as a dominant icon in their everyday lives. Additionally, the butte exhibits widespread material remains in the form of prehistoric artifacts, both on and below the surface, which have yielded and may continue to yield valuable information about Hohokam tradition. The petroglyphs on the butte have provided, and will doubtless continue to divulge, knowledge of the ancient Hohokam, including information about their planting seasons and a unique insight into the artistic capabilities of their culture. The petroglyphs that denote solar phenomenon continue to serve that purpose, accurately marking solstices and equinoxes every year. Indeed, much has been learned of the Hohokam culture through archaeological investigations on Tempe Butte over the past century, and the analysis of modern experts unanimously suggests that there is more to be revealed by the many unique prehistoric features of Tempe Butte.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

N/A

9. Major Bibliographical References

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<http://www.tempe.gov/historicpres/RFP-Figure1180%20Butte.jpg>

Interviews

Shane Anton, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, February 17, 2010; July 21, 2010.

Bob Gasser, Tempe Historic Preservation Commission Chair, January 26, 2010.

Dr. David Jacobs, Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, January 28, 2010; June 30, 2010; July 21, 2010.

Barnaby Lewis, GRIC Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, July 21, 2010.

Scott Solliday, Archaeologist, January 20, 2010.

Tom Wright, Archaeologist, SRP-MIC, February 17, 2010; July 21, 2010.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Hayden Library (Arizona State University)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 59
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 12N 412702 3699123
Zone Easting Northing

3 12N 413554 3698881
Zone Easting Northing

2 12N 412876 3699380
Zone Easting Northing

4 12N 413408 3698708
Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Tempe Butte is bounded on the north by Tempe Town Lake (comprising a portion of the Salt River), on the west by the Mill Avenue district of downtown Tempe, on the south by the Arizona State University campus, and on the east by additional structures associated with the university campus. The butte begins its ascendance at the 1,180 foot contour level.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries constitute the most well-known landmarks/locations on each respective side of Tempe Butte.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Billy Kiser
organization City of Tempe date January 19, 2011
street & number 21 East Sixth St. Ste. 208 telephone 480-350-8970
city or town Tempe state AZ zip code 85281
e-mail Billy_kiser@tempe.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Tempe Butte
City or Vicinity: Tempe
County: Maricopa **State:** Arizona
Photographers Victor Linoff and Billy Kiser
Date Photographed: March 24, 2010
Description of Photograph(s) and number:

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This outcrop, identified by Loendorf & Loendorf (1995, p. 14) as "outcrop 1," represents the largest concentration and greatest diversity of petroglyph examples on Tempe Butte.

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This view depicts Outcrop 1 in the context of its surrounding landscape, including the vegetative features of the desert environment. The summit of Tempe Butte (not pictured) would be located to the upper right of Outcrop 1 in this photograph.

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A more close-up view of the petroglyph panels on Outcrop 1.

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(Outcrop 1 Panel 14; *Loendorf, p. 19*) depicts two human figures standing beside one another with arms raised to the air. A third, less well-formed, human figure can be seen to the lower left of the two more prominent figures.

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(Outcrop 1 Panels 5,6,7,8; *Loendorf, pp. 16-18*). These four panels, in close proximity to one another, represent a wide variety of abstract shapes and figures. The panel contains one anthropomorph with a spiral below, as well as several spiral-shaped motifs of various shapes and sizes.

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Close-up of Outcrop 1, Panel 17 (*Loendorf, p. 19*). This is perhaps the most unique, distinguishable petroglyph on Tempe Butte. Located at the very top of Outcrop 1 (see photos 1-3), it appears to consist of two snail-type scroll/spiral figures attached to one another by a zig-zag line.

7 of 23

Outcrop 18 Panel 2 (*Loendorf, p. 72*) depicts three small near-perfect circles spread almost equidistant from one another. In the background (and slightly out-of-focus) can be seen a bullseye petroglyph. The bullseye appears to correspond with these three circles as a possible solstice marker. The three circles may have represented the position of the sun at various points of the year, which would have lined up with the bullseye at sunset.

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Close-up of Outcrop 18 Panel 2 (*Loendorf, p. 72*). The bullseye can once again be seen in the background.

9 of 23

Outcrop 18 Panel 7 (*Loendorf, p. 71*) is a large spiral design and also represents the largest petroglyph on the butte, making it visible from a great distance. As seen in the photograph, it is located on a steep, rocky, cliff-like area on the northwest portion of Tempe Butte.

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Close-up photograph of the same petroglyph, Outcrop 18 Panel 7 (*Loendorf, p. 71*).

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Identified as Outcrop 18 Panel 16 (*Loendorf, p. 76*), this petroglyph is representative of the typical spiral form found abundantly among Tempe Butte rock art

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A second view of the spiral comprising Outcrop 18, Panel 16.

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The same spiral (Outcrop 18, Panel 16), shown from a distance in its contextual setting. Note that the extremely rugged, broken nature of the rocks on this portion of the butte were not conducive to petroglyph production in most places, as there are very few flat rock surfaces.

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This spiral formation is identified as Outcrop 18 Panel 8 (Loendorf, p. 75). Another example of the common spiral form found on the butte, this petroglyph appears to be the victim of vandalism. Note the lower left corner, at about 7 o'clock, where a portion of the rock has been removed that once contained a portion of the spiral.

15 of 23

Identified as Outcrop 18 Panel 17 (Loendorf, p. 77), this large spiral is accompanied by a well-formed anthropomorph. This petroglyph is located on the northwest portion of the butte, where spirals seem to be the predominant type of rock art. Very few anthropomorphs are found here compared to other locations on the butte.

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Close-up photograph of the anthropomorph in the previous picture (Outcrop 18, Panel 17).

17 of 23

Outcrop 18 Panel 17 (Loendorf, p. 77) seen at a distance for contextual purposes.

18 of 23

Outcrop 27 Panel 18 (Loendorf, p. 99). The pipette motifs, found at the butte's summit, are representative of regional variations within the Gila Petroglyph Style. Such an element is found only in the more northerly Gila and Salt River regions of Hohokam inhabitation.

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Outcrop 27 Panel 18 (Loendorf, p. 99). A second view of the pipette motifs.

20 of 23

Outcrop 2 Panel 3 (Loendorf p. 25). This petroglyph features a large crescent flanked by a quadruped to the upper left and a figure-8 motif to the immediate right. This petroglyph has been said to represent weather control by the Hohokam medicine men.

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Outcrop 2 Panel 3 (Loendorf, p. 25). A second view of the same petroglyph.

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Outcrop 2 Panel 3 (Loendorf, p. 25). A close-up view of the figure-8 motif.

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Tempe Butte viewed from the southwest looking northeast.

Property Owner: (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.