



LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT PARTNERSHIP IN RHYOLITE, NV

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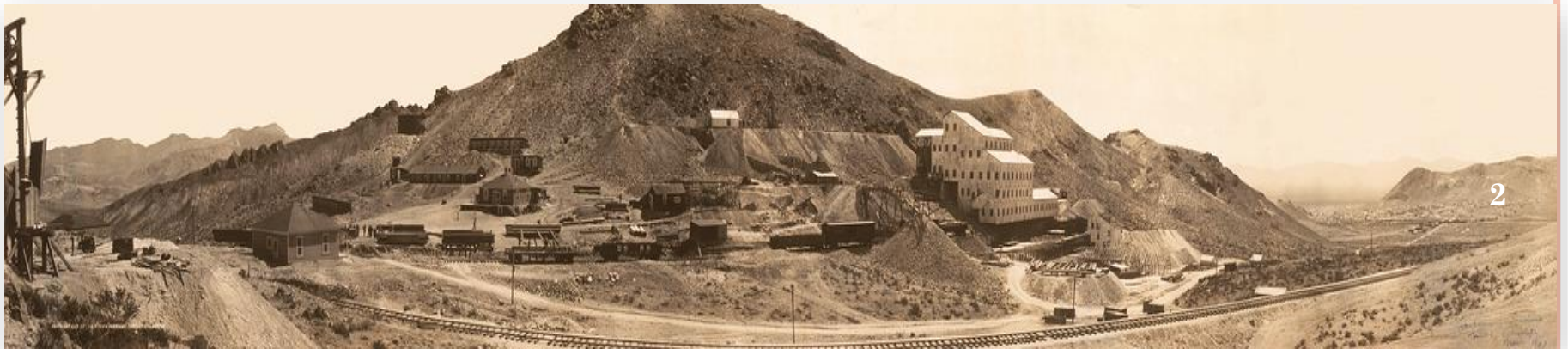
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WELCOME TO RHYOLITE NV

A Historic Mining District from the early twentieth century.

Also well known Ghost Town located in rural Nye County Nevada.



BRIEF HISTORY OF RHYOLITE NV



- Located 120 miles NW of Las Vegas, NV.
- Started in 1905 as a prospecting camp for gold mining.
- The Montgomery Shoshone Mine was the main investment and by 1907 the town was electrified!
- Peak population was 3,500 to 5,000 in 1908.
- Decline was rapid, the San Francisco Earthquake and financial panic made it difficult to raise development capital. By 1910 the mine was operating at a loss.
- The town of Rhyolite's population was falling, by 1920 it was close to zero.
- Now one of the most photographed ghost towns in the west, managed by the BLM.

RHYOLITE THEN



RHYOLITE TODAY



The Cook Bank Building, 1908 (left) and 2009 (right)



- Stone and concrete structures historically significant
- Popular with photographers and filmmakers

- After bust, buildings crumbled and materials were salvaged for nearby towns.
- Some entire structures moved to Beatty



SITE MANAGEMENT

- Transferred to BLM in 1990s
 - Safety and security risks
 - Financial burden
- BLM priorities ...
 - Stabilize the structures
 - Work with the County

“Fading Ghost : Gold-Mining Town of Rhyolite Is Losing Battle Against Nature and Vandals”

– LA Times, 1991



REASONS TO PARTNER

- County, city, nonprofit and other agency partners share an interest in Rhyolite
- No current formal partnership with the Friends Group, working in Rural areas adds to outreach difficulties.
- BLM saw needs partner could help fill
 - Site management
 - Promote tourism
 - Raise funds



MY EXPERIENCE

- I was tasked with establishing a partnership with the local Friends Group.
- This was my first BLM job.
- New field office
- New opportunity
- Warned about old issues, drilling down for the good of the order!
- Preconceptions and expectations

A BRIEF PEER DISCUSSION



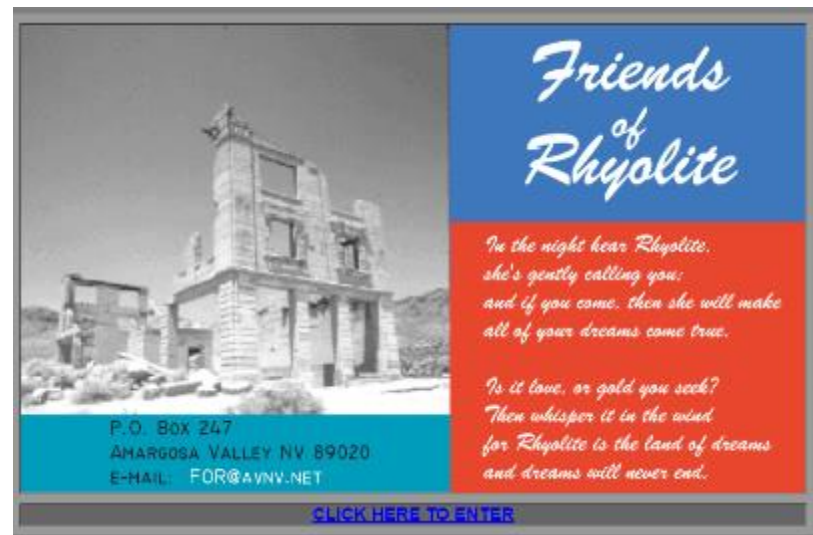
What defines a partnership?

What defines a Friends Group?

Are these definitions in conflict or mutually exclusive?

THE FRIENDS GROUP

- Nonprofit
- Works with the town of Beatty and County
- Focus on history and tourism
- Small, local residents
- Connection to Western Museum



DEFINING OUR ROLES AND RELATIONSHIP

- Historic and current relationship
 - Common interests, beyond “the town”
 - What each partner brings to the table
 - What each partner sees as a priority
 - How we work and who we work with
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- Clearly define benefits to the agency, resource, partners
 - Clearly explain guiding agreements, frameworks, authorities.

MEETING AND PARTNER REALITY

- Friends group was
 - Passionate about the town
 - Advocating with the County and city
 - Content with their role
 - Not interested in a formal partnership with BLM
 - Small capacity



PUSHING BOULDERS

- Does a friends group need to be a partner?
- Do they know what it would mean to partner with BLM?
- Is it enough that they are working with the county and city?



Rhyolite boulder

A BRIEF PEER DISCUSSION



Would you answer these differently?

What defines a partnership?

What defines a Friends Group?

Are these definitions in conflict or mutually exclusive?

LESSONS LEARNED

- Friends groups may not be structured in a way that lends itself to formal partnership with BLM
 - Capacity and sustainability of their organization
 - Interests and historic role
 - Differences in how we work
 - Expectations about who is responsible for what
 - Not all friends groups are the same



BEST PRACTICES

- Use your Partner Cultural Awareness
- Broader stakeholder engagement
- Walk in their shoes
- Understand what is, then work together to create the vision of what could be
- Keep an open mind and check your assumptions



YOUR THOUGHTS

- What could we have done differently?
- What best practices do you see?
- What are you taking away?

