

IMPORTANT: Please refer to the Preface for Topographic Map Activities for preliminary instructions and information common to all Topographic Map Activities in the series.

Topographic Map Activity 3 - Symbols (Revision 061620)

Objective: To locate the symbol legend, or key, and understand symbols in USGS Topographic Maps.

Background: From previous activities we have learned how to download and navigate the USGS Topographic maps of Red Rock Canyon NCA. Next, we will learn where the key to the symbols on the maps and what some symbols mean. There are a lot of different symbols including topographic contour lines, road lines, water symbols, and more.

Activity: In this activity, we'll find the topo map legend and identify symbols.

Step 1. Open the La Madre Mountain Topographic Map with a Ctrl. Click on the hyperlink. [La Madre Mountain](#)

Step 2. Once the map opens, ensure that all layers are being shown (refer to instructions in Preface for assistance).

Step 3. Navigate to find the attachment symbol (icon looks like a paper clip) and click attachments. Double click on US Topo Map Symbols.pdf. This four-page attachment will help identify the different symbols on the La Madre Mountain topographic map. Read to page 3, the start of the symbols. Note the different symbols including the circular symbol for State Route, the blue symbols for Spring and Intermittent Stream, and the green color for Woodland.

Step 4. In the upper tabs switch back to the La Madre Mountain map by clicking on the NV_La_Madre_Mountain tab. Use the Zoom + or – to zoom in and out on the map.

Step 5. Can you find the large Intermittent Stream called Red Rock Wash?

Step 6. Do the symbols for Red Rock Wash match the symbols for Intermittent Stream?

Step 7. Can you see if the Red Rock Wash goes higher than 4400 feet in elevation?

Step 8. Follow the Red Rock Wash as it travels across the map. Does the Red Rock Wash go lower than 3400 feet in elevation (look at the brown contour lines for elevation)?

Step 9. What direction does the wash flow when there is water present?

Step 10. Does this wash cross the State Route 159?

You have just studied the largest wash in Red Rock Canyon.

[Feedback](#)

Answers (AS stands for answer step):

AS5 Runs through the lower middles of the map

AS6 Three dots and blue line with dots

AS7 Yes

AS8 Yes

AS9 West to east

AS10 Yes