

# A festival celebrating aliens is being planned near Area 51 in Nevada

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An alien-like statue displays a sign welcoming guests to the Little A'le' Inn restaurant and gift shop on July 22, 2019, in Rachel, Nevada. A Facebook event entitled "Storm Area 51, They Can't Stop All of Us," which the author stated was meant as a joke, calls for people to storm the highly classified U.S. Air Force facility near Rachel on September 20, 2019, to address a conspiracy theory that the U.S. government is conducting tests with space aliens. Photo by: David Becker/Getty Images

The call to raid Area 51, a supposed Air Force base for aliens, was a joke. Then, 2 million people signed on to the Facebook event.

Authorities warned against an actual attempt to enter the base in the Nevada desert. However, if all goes to plan, hordes of strangers will gather in September near the secretive government facility. Area 51 has for decades been the source of countless conspiracy theories about aliens and UFOs.

Matthew Roberts is the man who created the Internet sensation, "Storm Area 51 - They Can't Stop All of Us." He is now planning a real-life festival called Alien Stock. It will be near the remote base within the Nevada Test and Training Range. It's a couple hours' drive northwest of Las Vegas. The festival will celebrate all things alien. It is promising to feature surprise performances, art installations and camping.

As a result, the tiny nearby town of Rachel, Nevada, is being overrun by media attention. It must prepare for potentially thousands of visitors. The town has just 54 residents, according to the last official government count. With that size, organizers must focus on the logistics of bringing thousands of people there.

"Of course it's scary," said Connie West, whose alien-themed inn declares on its website that it is "BOOKED SOLID FOR ALIEN-STOCK." "But I'm excited," she told the Washington Post. "How can I not be?"

### **Documents Proved Area 51 Is Real**

The U.S. government denied Area 51's existence for decades. However, in 2013, government documents proved it was real. The documents made no mention of aliens. They describe the site as an aircraft testing area. However, conspiracy theories were given new life two years ago. That's when it was discovered that the Defense Department spent \$22 million on a program dealing with "anomalous aerospace threats." Those are commonly known as UFOs.

Rachel has long embraced the rumors of hidden aliens and their spacecraft. A town welcome sign notes an extraterrestrial population as well as a human one. Visitors drive down the Extraterrestrial Highway to get there.

However, not everyone is happy about the prospect of so many visitors in September, West said.

"We live in a quiet little place because we like it quiet," she said.

Brock Daily is one of the organizers of the festival. He told the Washington Post he's expecting 5,000 to 30,000 people to show up for Alien Stock.

Any total in the thousands will pose logistical challenges in a place as small and rural as Rachel. A prominent notice on the town's website warns festivalgoers of the limited infrastructure. "There is no gas and no store.... We expect cell service and the Internet to be offline," the note reads. "Credit card [processing] will not work, so bring enough cash."

### **"A Meeting Place For All The Believers"**

Alien Stock bills itself as "a meeting place for all the believers." That includes people at least intrigued by the possibility of extraterrestrial life, Daily explained. He also guesses some will come just to witness an online craze come to life. Most details on the entertainment for the festival have yet to be released. The only planned guest announced online is a rock 'n' roll group called Wily Savage.

"With a normal festival, you have a business structure that's already lined out," Daily said. "You have a theme and an idea that you're going to try to market to the public. Whereas with us we had this monster on our hands."

Roberts did not respond to an interview request from the Post. He did tell a California news station that he wants the event to be "positive, enjoyable, safe and profitable for the rural area of Nevada."

Some Facebook commenters took a more conspiratorial view of the event's motives. When it was announced, one person commented, "Distraction ... well played, government."

## Quiz

1 Read the paragraph from the section "Documents Proved Area 51 Is Real."

*The U.S. government denied Area 51's existence for decades. However, in 2013, government documents proved it was real. The documents made no mention of aliens. They describe the site as an aircraft testing area. However, conspiracy theories were given new life two years ago. That's when it was discovered that the Defense Department spent \$22 million on a program dealing with "anomalous aerospace threats." Those are commonly known as UFOs.*

Which of the following is an accurate explanation of what this paragraph means?

- (A) The documents, released in 2013, were supposed to be kept secret.
- (B) The conspiracy theories about Area 51 have been proven false.
- (C) The government has definitely discovered that alien life exists.
- (D) The public has learned more information about Area 51 from government documents.

2 Read the section "Documents Proved Area 51 Is Real."

Select the paragraph from the section that shows many people who live near Area 51 are interested in aliens.

- (A) Rachel has long embraced the rumors of hidden aliens and their spacecraft. A town welcome sign notes an extraterrestrial population as well as a human one. Visitors drive down the Extraterrestrial Highway to get there.
- (B) However, not everyone is happy about the prospect of so many visitors in September, West said.
- (C) Brock Daily is one of the organizers of the festival. He told the Washington Post he's expecting 5,000 to 30,000 people to show up for Alien Stock.
- (D) Any total in the thousands will pose logistical challenges in a place as small and rural as Rachel. A prominent notice on the town's website warns festivalgoers of the limited infrastructure. "There is no gas and no store.... We expect cell service and the Internet to be offline," the note reads. "Credit card [processing] will not work, so bring enough cash."

3 What is the relationship between "Storm Area 51 - They Can't Stop All of Us" and Alien Stock?

- (A) "Storm Area 51 - They Can't Stop All of Us" was created as a joke, but so many people were interested that the man who created it decided to organize a real festival called Alien Stock.
- (B) "Storm Area 51 - They Can't Stop All of Us" was created as a joke, but so many people signed up for it that the man who created it decided to go ahead with the event after changing the name of the raid to Alien Stock.
- (C) Matthew Roberts organized Alien Stock as a way for people interested in aliens to connect, and it was so successful that he decided to plan "Storm Area 51 - They Can't Stop All of Us" next.
- (D) Matthew Roberts organized Alien Stock as a way for people interested in aliens to connect, but it was canceled by the government after too many people signed up for "Storm Area 51 - They Can't Stop All of Us."

4 Why does Connie West feel nervous about Alien Stock?

- (A) because she has never seen an actual alien before
- (B) because thousands of people are expected to attend the festival
- (C) because she has never been to a town without stores or gas stations
- (D) because Area 51 is only a short distance away from the festival