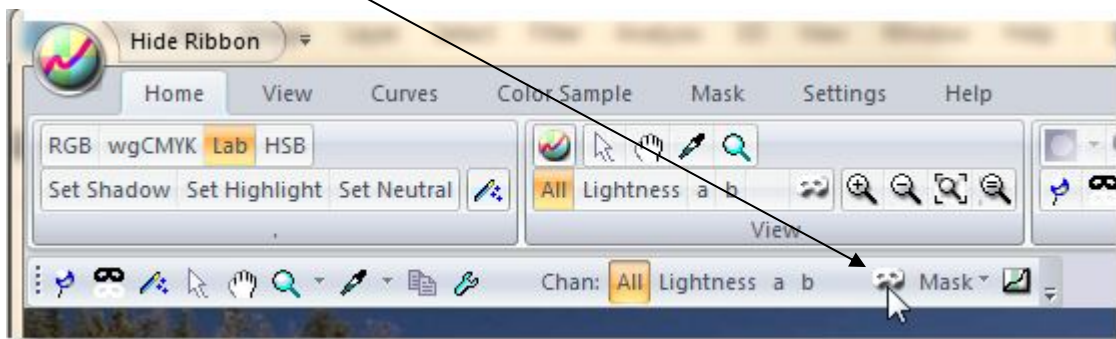To continue this I needed to be able to post it as a more complete explanation.
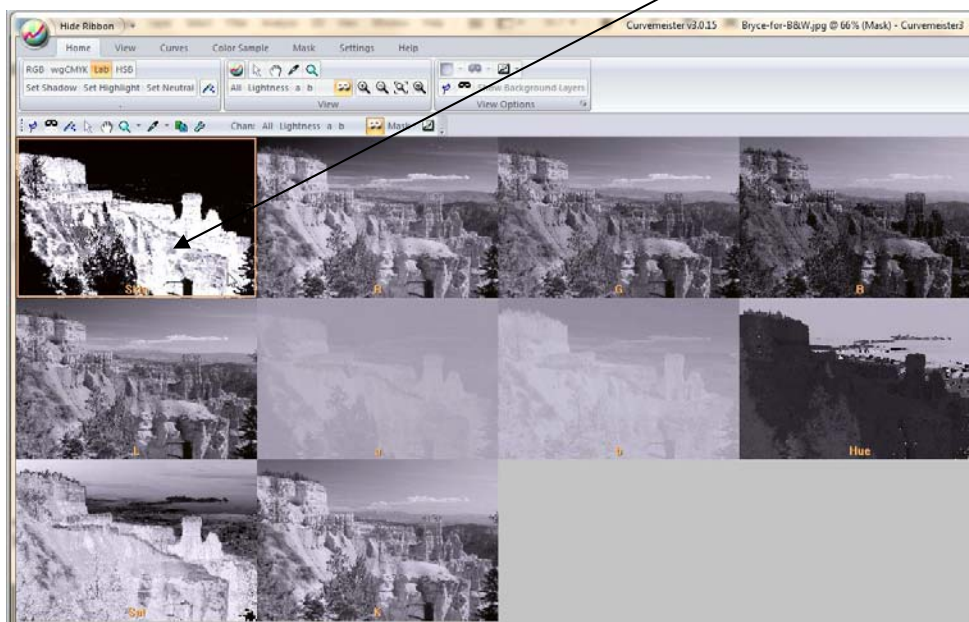
After the channels have been split into separate images you can use Curvemeister on the original color image to create masks for various parts of the image.
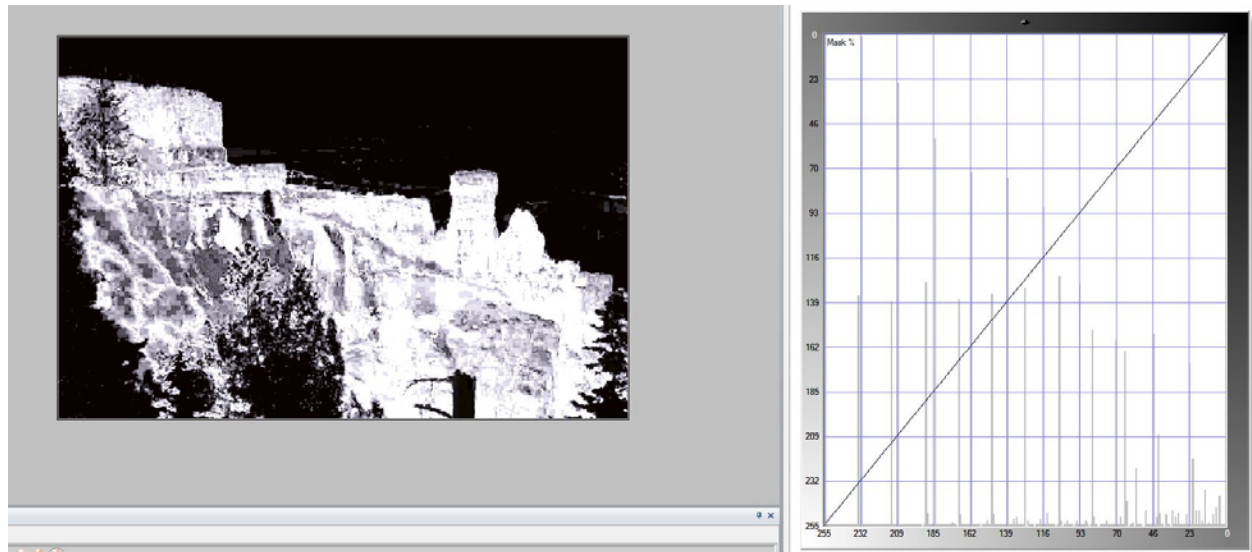
I'll start with the Sky.

Open the original image in PS along with the other three channel images. Using Curvemeister click on the mask pallet icon.
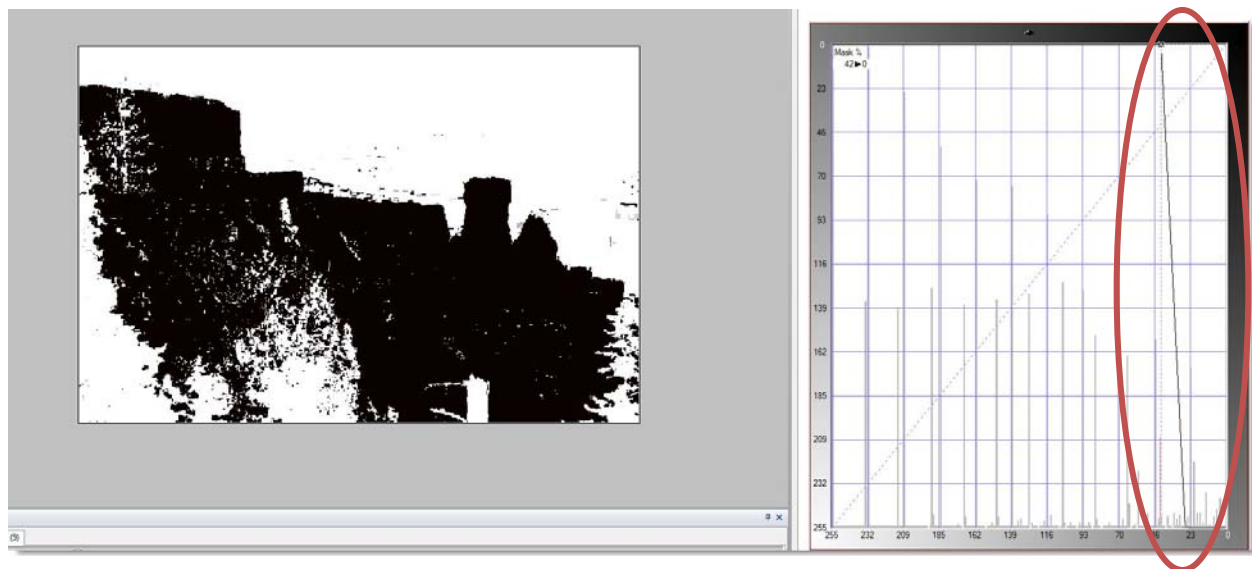

This will give you a view of the various channels and allow you to look for a good candidate for a mask. For this part of the image I will be choosing a Skin channel mask...

WHAT?!?   A Skin Channel?? There is no such thing....Well...In CM Mike Russell has created a virtual channel where the skin tones are a contrast to the rest of the image. This allows you to work on skin tones without messing up the rest of the image, if you are shooting people pictures this channel can be a godsend... for this landscape the orange of the rock is within the range of the "Skin Channel"   so I'm going to use it....
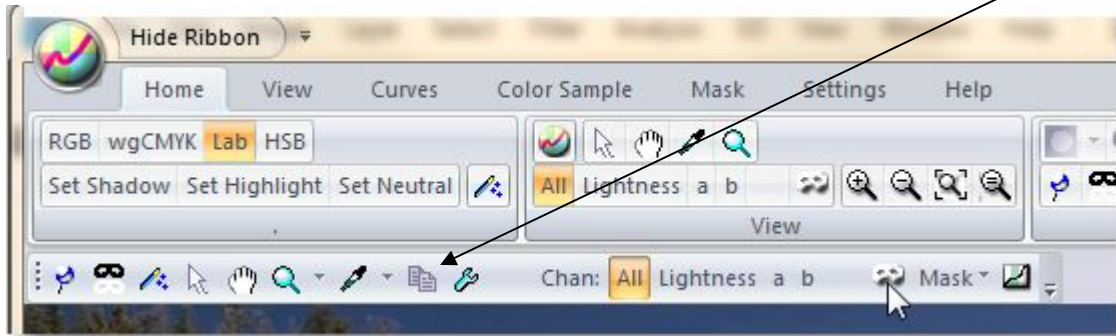

The skin channel already has a solid separation between the sky and the rocks so I just hove to increase the contrast a bit to get rid of the middle grays in the rocks...

Above I have turned the curve on it's end and moved it to the far right to increase the contrast and remove some of the lighter values making the mask more complete...the solid line from top to bottom within the ellipse is the actual curve line.

Next we need to copy this mask back to Photoshop. Later in the CM course we cover using masks created by CM but here is a preview.
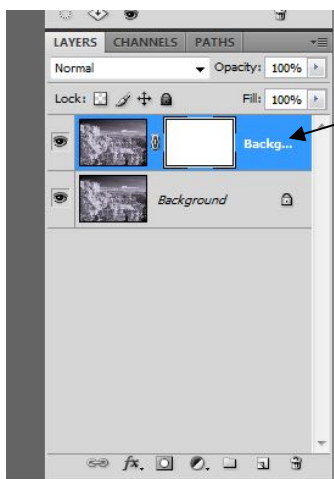
Click on the Copy Mask Icon it will be blue when you have a channel you can copy.

Then bring the R_Channel image to the front. Be very careful about which image you select and make sure you have the right one...

Create a copy of the background and attach a layer mask to the copy

Alt-Click on the white square and open the mask. Your screen will have a large white square on it...Press Ctrl-V to paste the channel copy from the clipboard to the layer mask.
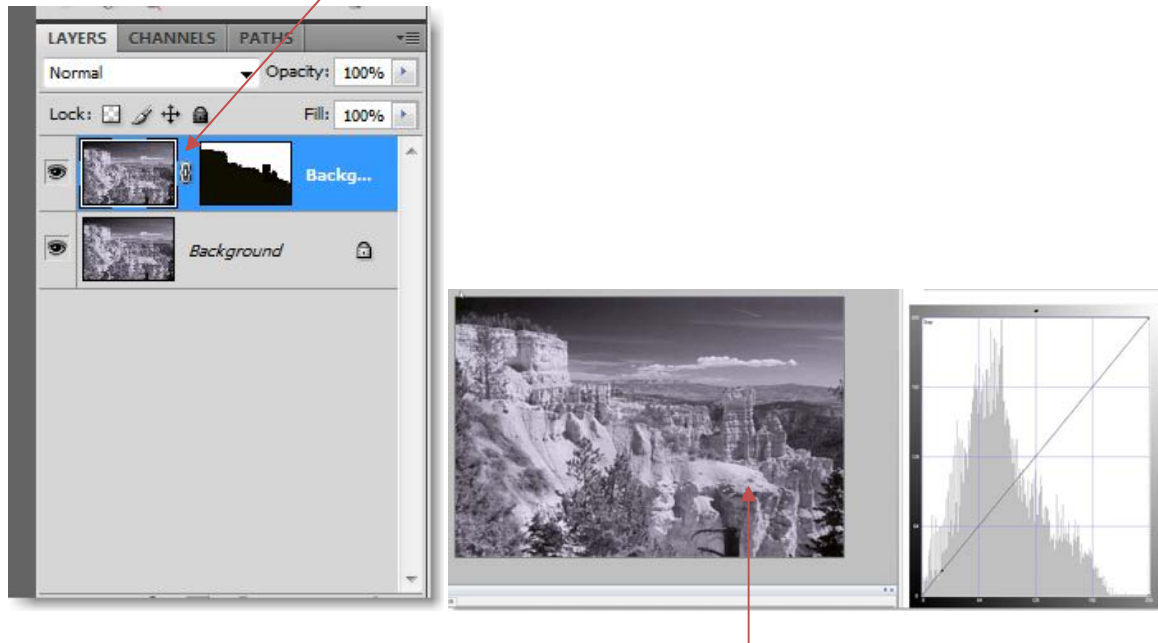

Now that we have a mask on the RChannel image we can paint out the white from the foreground and then use the mask to help us make the adjustment to the sky. I chose the red channel because I will be able to increase the contrast on the sky and make it very dramatic without adding too much noise. If you try this with the B channel the sky will get very muddy and blotchy.

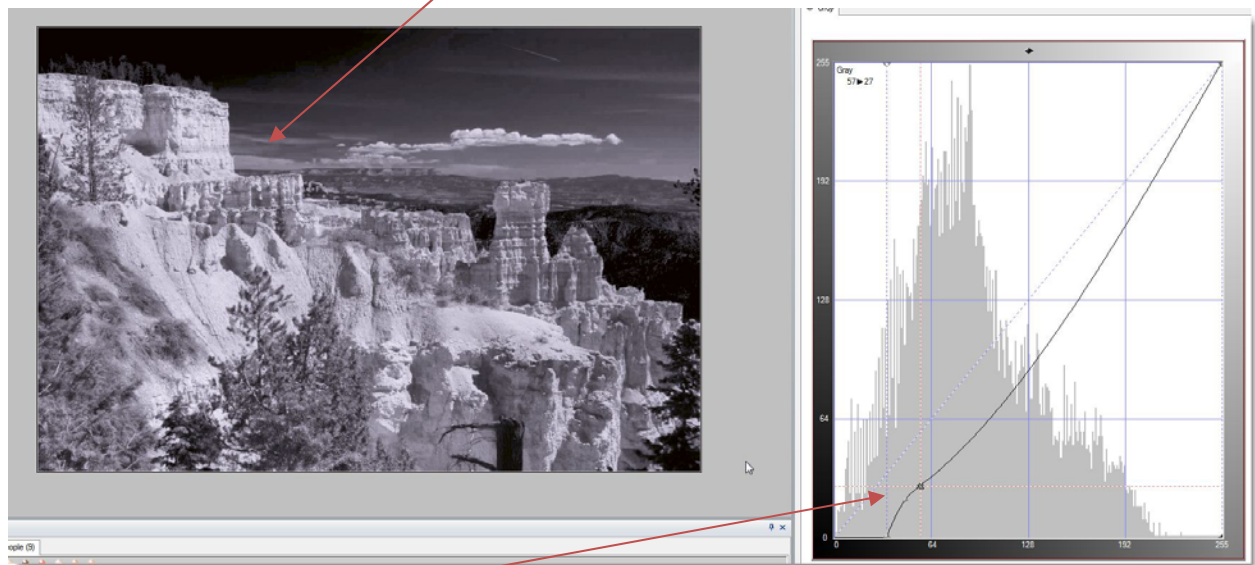Paint out the white foreground using PS tools.

Select the image part of the mask layer by clicking on the image. It will have a black frame around it when you have it selected.
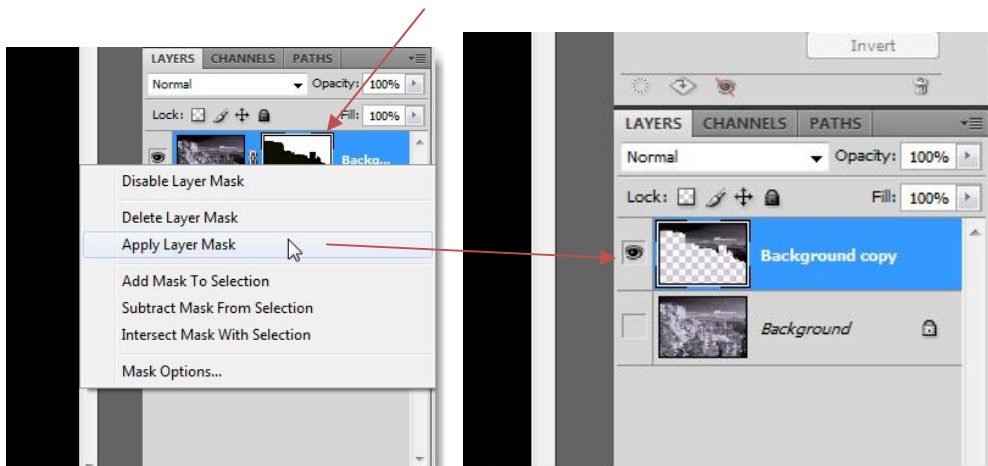

Open Curvemeister and you will see the image of the red channel. When you make your adjustment you will see that only the sky is changing.

I added this little "Lizard Tail" to the image curve because I wanted to keep the trees at the top of the ridge on the left of the image. Without this little step the trees would blend into the background. The image shown on the next page it the real effect of using this mask. Once the Sky was satisfactory I applied the mask to the layer because I wanted to only bring the areas I changed forward into the final image.
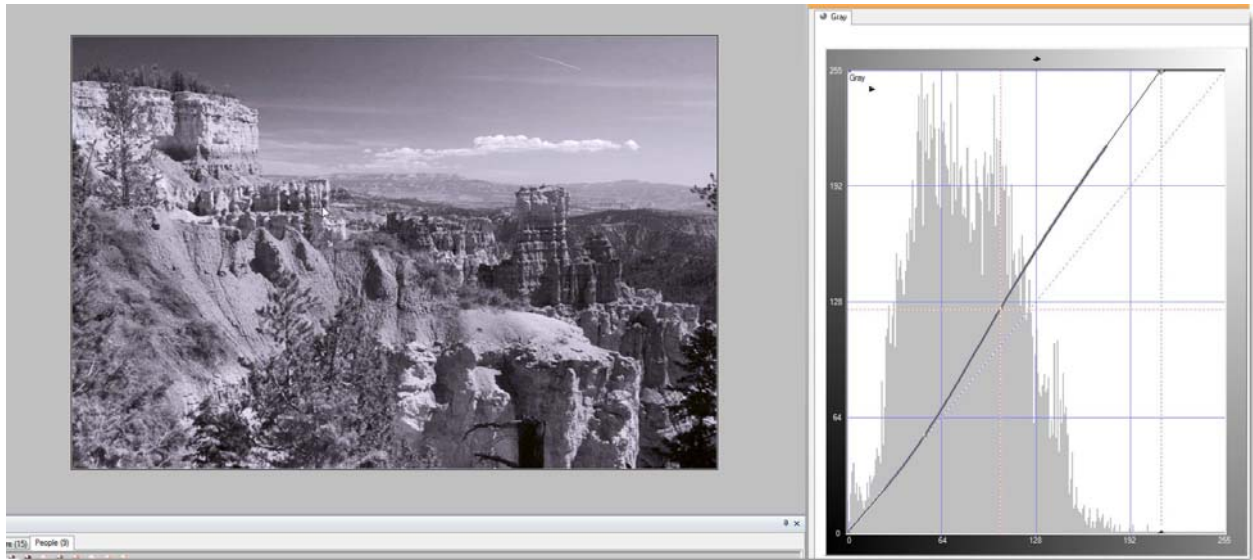
To apply the mask to the layer right click on the mask and select apply mask.

This simplifies the mask a bit and keeps the file size down as we go forward. Next, Bring the green channel forward and have it as the active image in PS.

Adjust the Green Channel in Curvemeister so that the majority of the image is to your liking.

Open the RChannel image again and copy the layer by making it active and pressing Ctrl-A to select all then Ctrl-C to copy.
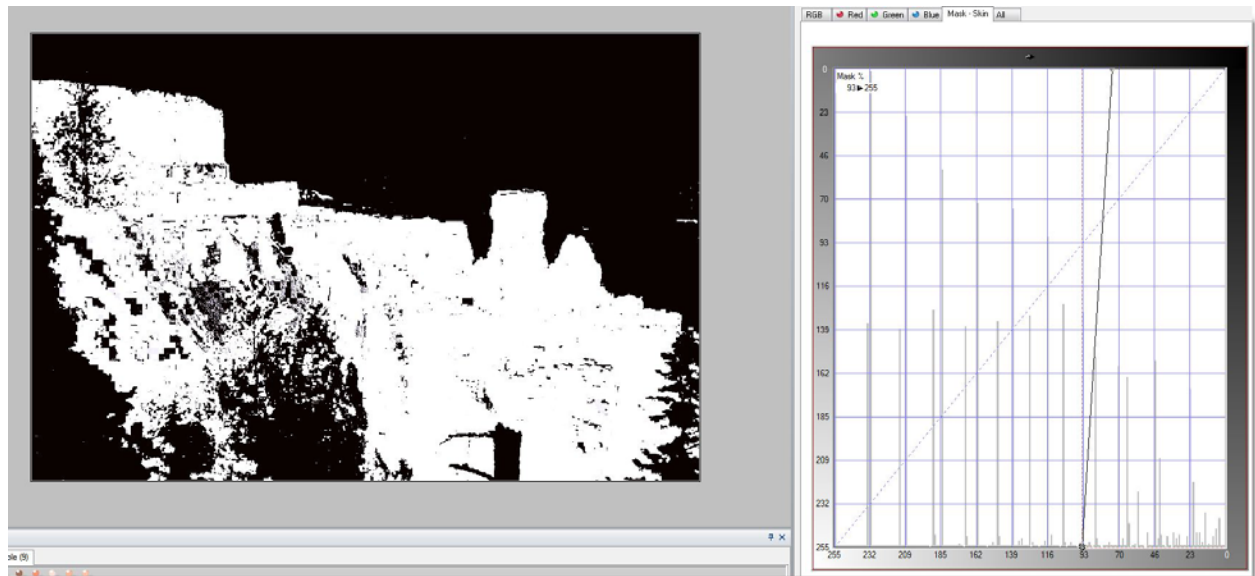

Paste the image into the GChannel image as a layer. for this step there is no need to reduce the opacity of the layer you want the sky to be dramatic.

So far the image is looking much better but there is some details in the highlights of the rocks that are found in the BChannel so we have to go get them. I used the same process for the BChannel mask. Open the original Color image in CM again and select the Skin channel from the mask pallet.

This time I kept the rocks more open and did not move the curve as much to make the mask a bit more useful for the BChannel.
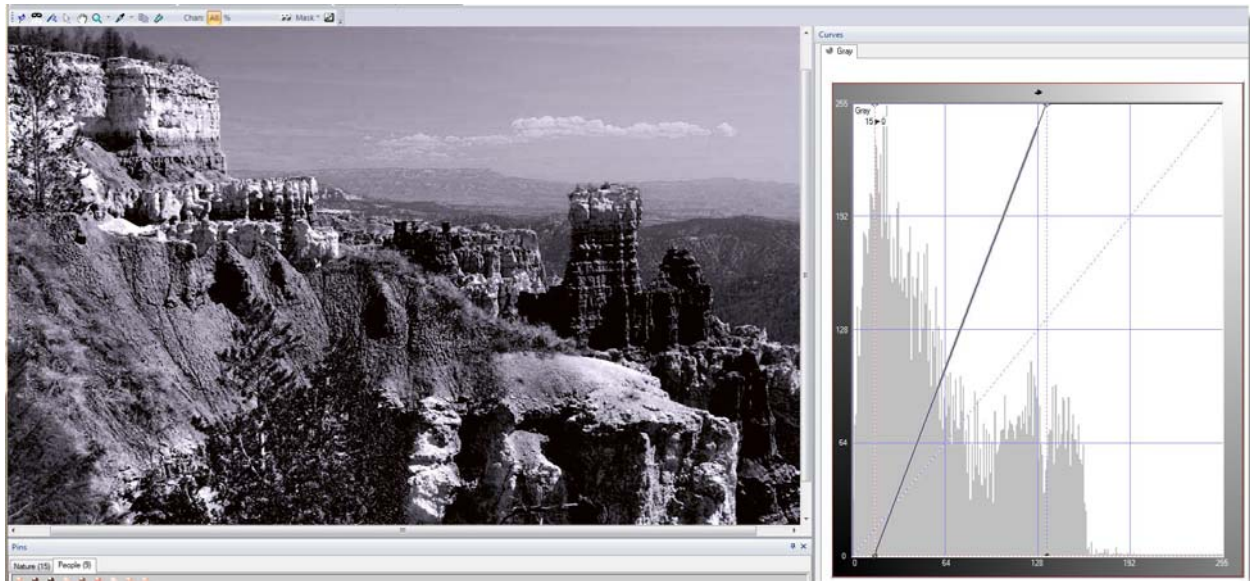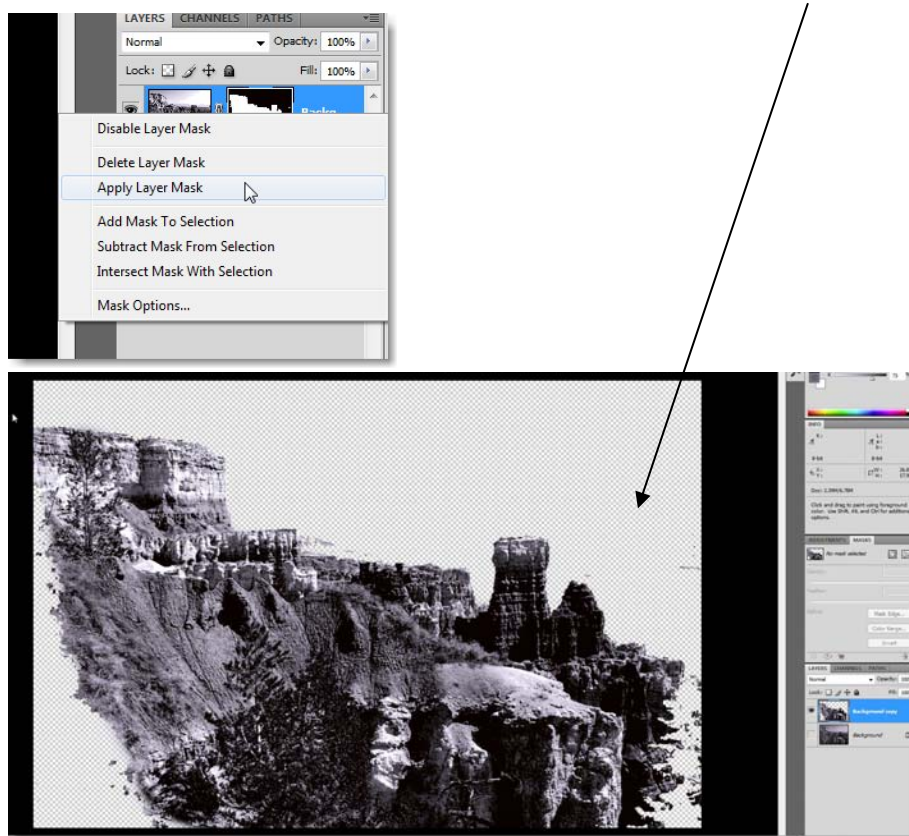
Copy it as before and paste it into the BChannel image as a layer mask. This time I want to paint out the blacks on the foreground so that the rocks get the full effect of the adjustments to follow.

Again adjust the image in CM to make the rocks look the best and apply the shanges.

In Photoshop again apply the mask to the layer so that only the changes are brought forward.

Copy the layer as before and paste it as a new layer into the GChannel image. This time you need to adjust the opacity of the image so that you do not completely lose the brightest highlights. The b channel is very heavy and you should try to keep it's effects under your control as much as possible.