



ROCK COLLECTING GUIDE

U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OREGON & WASHINGTON

GENERAL INFORMATION

A wide variety of rocks, minerals, and semi-precious gemstones is available for collecting on 16 million acres of lands managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Oregon and Washington. Most BLM lands are open to rock collecting, and some areas, such as the Glass Buttes obsidian area in our Prineville District and a public sunstone area in our Lakeview District, have been specifically set aside for this purpose. Collectors should note that there are some restrictions and a BLM permit may be required, depending on the amount of material you collect, how you collect it, where or when you collect, and whether the material will be used commercially. The following information is provided for the public to be used as a general guide for collecting on BLM lands in Oregon and Washington.

COLLECTING LIMITS & PERMITS

An individual can collect a reasonable amount of rocks and minerals from BLM lands, but a permit or fee may be required if certain amounts are exceeded, as described below. Note: Collecting limits for petrified wood are slightly different.

A REASONABLE DAILY COLLECTION AMOUNT

- Fits into the trunk of a car or,
 - Is a partial pickup truck load or, *No fee or BLM permit is required*
 - Weighs less than 250 lbs or,
 - The material is for non-commercial use *required*
- (For petrified wood, see below)

MORE THAN A REASONABLE DAILY COLLECTING AMOUNT

- Is a full pickup truck load or,
 - Involves more than one trip (or partial load) or, *Fee and BLM permit, Notice, or Plan of Operations are required*
 - Weighs more than 250 lbs or,
 - The material is for commercial use or,
 - Explosives or power equipment is used *required*
- (For petrified wood, see below)

PETRIFIED WOOD

Collecting petrified wood is free up to 25 pounds per day, plus one piece, but no more than 250 pounds per year. Pooling of quotas among two or more people to obtain pieces over 250 pounds is prohibited. A permit is needed for amounts over these limits.

REMAINS, ARTIFACTS, AND FOSSILS

The excavation, collection or destruction of any human remains and archaeological or historical materials located on Federal land is illegal and prohibited by Federal and State laws. This includes: skeletal materials, arrowheads, flakes, pottery or potsherds, mats, rock art, old bottles, and pieces of equipment or buildings. Any human remains should be left intact and reported to Federal or State authorities immediately. A permit is needed for collecting vertebrate fossils, but not for common invertebrate fossils.

MINING CLAIMS

Collecting rocks, minerals or semi-precious gemstones on mining claims is not advised without the mining claimant's consent because the claimant has a legal right to the minerals on the claim, including gemstones. Although mining claims should be marked with posts or markers, not all mining claims can be easily identified in the field. Check with the nearest BLM office to find out if there are any mining claims to watch out for in the area from which you want to collect. Many commonly collected rocks such as chert, petrified wood, obsidian, and cinders are not subject to mining claim location, even though people sometimes mistakenly stake mining claims for these minerals anyway.

ROCK STOCKPILES

Some BLM rock quarries have stockpiles of crushed rock in them that have been purchased by BLM specifically for road-maintenance work. Removing this stockpiled material is prohibited and considered theft of Federal property.

CLOSED OR RESTRICTED AREAS

Although most BLM lands are open to collecting, some areas such as campgrounds, cultural and historic sites, and natural areas are off limits to collecting. Other types of closures or restrictions, some of which are seasonal, include fire, wildlife, road use, wilderness, and Wilderness Study Areas. Check with the local BLM office for more detailed information before starting out on your collecting excursion.

OTHER THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN COLLECTING

1. Know whose property you are on.
2. Get permission to collect on private property.
3. Limit your excavation depth to four feet from the original ground surface.
4. Fill in any holes that you have dug.
5. Leave the area and all gates as you found them.
6. Find out if there are any fire restrictions in effect.
7. Stay out of old mines.

MAPS AND OTHER INFORMATION

You should contact either the nearest BLM office for more detailed information about specific collecting sites or our Portland office listed below for the addresses and phone numbers of the various BLM field offices. Many bookstores and rock shops may also have information or sell books and maps that can help you find other privately owned collecting areas.

OR/WA BLM STATE OFFICE LOCATION

1220 SW 3rd Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

OREGON BLM OFFICE LOCATIONS

Baker City, Burns, North Bend, Eugene, Lakeview, Klamath Falls, Salem, Tillamook, Medford, Prineville, Roseburg, Vale

WASHINGTON BLM OFFICE LOCATIONS

Spokane and Wenatchee

PLEASE HELP PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE. REPORT ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO ANY BLM OFFICE THAT MAY INVOLVE THEFT OR VANDALISM OF ANY REMAINS, ARTIFACTS, FOSSILS OR VANDALISM TO YOUR PUBLIC LANDS.