

# Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada



## !Highgrader Newsletter!



### NOTICE

- September 19th, Outing TBA!!
- 50/50 Raffle evaluation!
- Please, If you have any prospecting related Books, magazines, or articles, bring them to your club Librarian.

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### Secretary Minutes As of July 1st, 2009.

#### GSSN Meeting August 5, 2009 MINUTES

The GSSN met at the American Legion Hall in Henderson NV on Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2009. President Nic Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM & led in pledging allegiance to the flag. 54 members signed in and there were 8 visitors.

Several attendees said they'd found a few items while prospecting when Nic asked if anyone had found gold. Nic then announced that the executive board had approved of the GSSN donating a one-year membership to both the GPAA and MPA in the interests of a good neighbor policy which each respective club could raffle off. There was a brief discussion and Jake Jakl then made a motion to approve such donation, which was seconded by Morris Seguin. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion and it was so carried. Janet Schelling then gave an interesting gold panning demonstration. Afterwards, Nic asked about approval of the July meeting minutes which were posted in the Highgrader. Don Adams made a motion to approve the minutes as published and Jean Davis seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimously in favor of the motion and it was so carried. Next, Joyce Johnson gave a report on the GSSN library and said there were many duplicates of items which could be made available for members' use. Tom Herrold also mentioned he had some disks which indexed the contents of the GSSN library from past years. Randy Huffine suggested putting a note in the Highgrader whereby people could donate books to the library. Jake J., who is GPAA librarian, will also look into getting the library materials coordinated.

Dennis Johnson addressed the group on several topics, including new claims (four mines) that the GSSN was interested in, but which were sold recently, as well as some other possibilities. He suggested anyone having interest should feel free to contact him for more info. He also suggested members go online to ICMJ-online to check it out. Next Bonny Evelyn made a motion to bring back the 50/50 raffle (which had been pre-

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### Club Officers Of 2009!

President	Nicolas Johnson
Vice President	Carl Richwine
Secretary	Dolores Gee
Treasurer	Dara Thaler
Membership	Marcia Richwine
Education	Fred Zajac
Outings	Morris Seguin
Claims	Carl Richwine Dennis Johnson
Librarian	Joyce Johnson
Newsletter	Nicolas Johnson
Webmaster	Jim Miller
Audit Committee	Fred Zajac John Gee Jake Jakl
Merchandising Committee	Bonnie Evelyn Al Kraus Joyce Johnson Jeff Harper
Greeter	Don Adams Jean Davis

**Wanted:**  
140/141 Drywasher  
with or without Motor.  
Please call @  
928-897-0571

**Wanted:** Small spiral  
wheel to do shop prospecting with. **Please call Duwayne @ 702-303-0977**

## !!RAFFLE WINNERS CORNER!!

Door Prize ( \$5.00 ) - Dolores Gee

3' long Tub.....	John Bronstien	Small Black Round Tub.....	Janet Schelling
4 Beer Glasses.....	Jeff Harper	Plastic Trowel.....	John Bronstien
2 Dust Pans.....	Jerry Rosinski / Carl Richwine	Pair Work Gloves.....	John Crafts
Card and Dice Game.....	John Roberts	Flashlight.....	Morris Seguin
Orange Bucket & Organizer.....	Fred Desilva	Whiskey Decanter.....	Gary Gueer
12" Keene Gold Pan.....	Randy Huffine	Assorted Stones in Box.....	Pam Goulder
14" Keene Gold Pan.....	Steve Hedland	Gold Sand.....	Bruce Roberts
10" Gold Pan.....	Vern Cook	Two Sets of Batteries.....	Bonnie Evelyn / Steve Hedland
		Hammock.....	Terry Tucker



viously tabled) for discussion. There was discussion and Jake J. made a motion to initiate a 50/50 raffle on a trial basis for four months which could then be re-evaluated at that time; and Dennis Johnson seconded the motion. The vote was all but one in favor of the motion, and one against – so the motion was carried. Next Nic mentioned the Sept. 19, 2009 outing at White Hills and asked for food suggestions. Hot dogs, brats, hamburgers were mentioned & it was decided to put this on the agenda for the September meeting. Nic then provided some further info he had researched regarding Luigi Lopresso's comments last month regarding California claims. Nic found out that laws regarding dredging and sluicing called for fees started out in the range of \$329 for one claim & \$659 for two claims +++ .

A short break was taken and then the raffle began. Dolores Gee won the \$5 door prize and the other raffle prizes are noted below. At 8:30 PM Bruce Roberts made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Morris Seguin - & it was so adjourned at that time.

### GOLD SEARCHERS OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

Financial statement for month of: July 09

Balance Forward: 5655.88

Bank interest adjustment: 1.15

Balance: 5657.03

**Income:**

Membership Dues: 345.00

Raffle: 162.00

Bank Interest: -

Other: -

Total Income: 507.00

Balance: 6164.03

**Expenses:**

Rent: 50.00

Food: -

Raffle Prizes: -

Door Prize: 5.00

Newsletter Printing: 124.32

Newsletter Postage: 53.39

Office supplies, postage for

Membership, etc: 46.54 Book

Miscellaneous expense: 377.00

Total Expenses: 650.25

Balance: 5513.78

Petty cash Balance: 100.00

Prepared by: [Signature] Treasurer, GSSN



## Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada Board Meeting Minutes!

The GSSN Board met at Panera Bread on Wednesday, July 15, 2009. Pres. Nic Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM & thanked the board members for coming. In attendance were: Jeff Harper, Joyce Johnson, Dara Thaler, Dolores Gee, Morris Seguin, Bonny Evelyn, Richard Thomas and Nic. Nic reported back to the board regarding Luigi Lopresso's mention at the last membership meeting pertaining to the BLM's selling claims in California. Nic has detailed information available that he obtained regarding costs, fees, etc. and said anyone interested in getting this detailed info can contact him. He then asked the group whether he should contact Gus Langerstrohm about a speaking date; and the Board agreed that it would be fine for him to do so. Nic then asked about our donating a free GSSN membership to the GPAA and MPA to raffle off in the interest of good will club interaction. Joyce Johnson made a motion to make such donations, which was seconded by Dara Thaler. After a very brief discussion, the vote was unanimously in favor of the motion. Nic then asked about the possibility of change the venue of board meetings from Panera to Dara's Boulder City location. Joyce Johnson made a motion to do so, which was seconded by Morris Seguin. There was a brief discussion followed by the voting, which was unanimously in favor of approving the motion & it was so carried.

At this time Dara gave brief membership and treasure's reports and mentioned that it would be highly advantageous for GSSN to have a petty cash fund created. Bonny Evelyn made a motion to create a \$100 petty cash fund which was seconded by Richard Walton. After a brief discussion the vote was unanimously in favor of the motion & it was so carried. Next the group discussed changing the \$5 door prize awarded at each monthly membership meeting on a temporary basis to see how it went. It was suggested that everyone attending would have the option of making a 25-cent voluntary contribution toward a "door prize kitty" and when the number was drawn as usual, the winner would receive the "kitty" provided he or she had contributed a quarter. If the winning number had not made such a 25-cent contribution, then the "kitty" would be rolled over to the next month, and the same procedure would be conducted. Jeff Harper made a motion to enact this new door prize procedure, and Morris Seguin seconded the motion. There was some discussion, followed by a vote which was unanimous in approving the motion. Next Bonny E. brought up the subject of a 50/50 raffle, but Nic mentioned that such topic had been tabled previously and he would bring it up at the next monthly membership meeting. There was then a discussion of an inventory of the GSSN's equipment and supplies as well as all other of the club's assets and this will be followed up.

Next, Jeff Harper of the merchandise committee showed some T-shirt samples which the club could have made up on a no-cost incurred basis which could be sold by the club as a fund-raiser, and will report back to the group at the next meeting. After this discussion, the matter of the club's newsletter, website and mailings were discussed and these matters too will be followed up and discussed further at the next meeting.

At 7:25PM Morris S. made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Jeff Harper. The meeting so adjourned at that time.

## Legislature Updates

It's Aug. 17 2009 ooh dark thirty A.M. and I'm late again. Nick reminded me last night to get this article done NOW! We need to go to press, and keep it short. Well here go's.

At the last general meeting (Aug.5 2009) I opened my big mouth and said I would put the latest updates in the newsletter. But after reviewing all that is going on and the added cost to put it in the newsletter I need to ask all of you to go to your computer and look at it on-line. As I said at the meeting I'm not going to influence anyone about politics, I'm not smart enough. You knew that didn't ya? But all this is very important to know at this time. Our activity of prospecting for gold is at risk, and many other activities as well. The most important two, deals with the California Senate Bill 670 suction dredging issues and Hillman v. DFG. On August 6 Governor Schwarzenegger signed the bill temporarily halting dredging in California. There are many other news releases and free articles you can read complete with updates and links to respond if you wish at ([www.icmj.com](http://www.icmj.com)) If you are not familiar with it or their publication ( Prospecting and Mining Journal ) click the (About Us) on the Home Page. Then scroll down to Free Articles and then click on (View All Free Articles) This will bring you up to date with every Legislative and Regulatory update we need to know about as responsible prospectors. I apologize to all at the last meeting and to Scott M. Harn Publisher/Editor for not adding these issues to this month's newsletter but time and printing cost prohibit doing so at this time. Please, please, please take the time to read about them and get involved. If you would like to talk to me via e-mail here it is. ( [Sierrabart@hotmail.com](mailto:Sierrabart@hotmail.com) )

By Dennis Johnson  
Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada, Inc.

PS One of our members reminded me of a Quote " California sneezes and the rest of the country catches a cold.

# You Can “Find an Ounce of Gold a Day”

By Roy Lagal

From the Highgrader Historical Records (May, 2004 Edition)

## Dry Panning

Dry panning is not the most reliable method of discovering gold in desert areas. Often it is the only practical one. Gold pans require riffle traps that are sharp and deep. The riffles should be positioned at a 90° degree angle to the wall of the pan. Gravity trap riffles are designed like a small dry-washing sluice box. If operated properly, the riffles make this pan excellent for testing purposes, even when water is not available.

### Instructions

As you follow these instructions, observe and follow this routine. Place the dirt in a large, gravity trap gold pan. Clean larger rocks by rubbing them against each other or by striking them together sharply. Let the dirt and small gravel that is loosened fall into the gold pan. Discard the thoroughly cleaned rocks after careful inspection to make certain none of them is a nugget.

Sift fingers through the remaining materials and lift out the smaller rocks without removing any fine gravel or sand. Examine these rocks carefully for traces of gold before discarding. Continue examination of materials until only fine concentrate remains.

Lift the pan with one hand and tilt at a 45° degree angle with riffles on the lower side. This permits contents to flow over the riffles, which will trap the fold. Use your other hand to bump the higher edge of the pan close to you. A sharp bump will vibrate the contents of the pan as they flow over the riffles. Continue bumping the pan and occasionally level it to shift contents to the bottom. Repeat this procedure as the lighter material gradually flows out of the pan. Finally only one or two handfuls of concentrates will remain.

Inspect the remaining material by spreading the concentrates over the pan. You will occasionally expose a small nugget or gold flake. Use tweezers to retrieve the nuggets or gold flakes.

### Thoughts on Gold Panning.

When searching in rugged canyons and other remote locations, it is difficult to carry the dry washing unit that is necessary to test for gold. Because dry panning with a gravity trap pan is easily accomplished, such a pan should always be carried even when prospecting in areas remote from water.

The deserts of Western America contain many fortunes in gold that have simply been overlooked. Some were never tested because water was not available. If in doubt about an area, use your gravity trap gold pan.

## Nugget Hunting

The term “Nugget Hunting” is so ambiguous that no description of it could ever be complete. Even though many articles and books have been written about this method of searching, prospectors generally find the written instructions too complicated. Condensing descriptions of target areas and summarizing only the easiest most productive searching methods has produced the following instructions that are simple but that employ methods that have proven successful the world over.

Let me emphasize that literally millions of dollars in gold nuggets are being discovered all over the world today with metal detectors. These devices enable suspect areas to be searched in a manner never before possible. It is reasonable to state that more nuggets have already been discovered with metal detectors than were ever discovered in all the famous old gold rushes.

Using a modern metal detector will undoubtedly produce the best results where gold abounds and large nuggets commonly occur, such as certain “Mother Lode” areas, the deserts of the Western United States, Alaska, Australia, New Zealand, China, Mexico, Africa and other areas of the world where sizable nuggets appear in nature. Use of the metal detector as an optional gold hunting tool will provide the weekend prospector with many enjoyable and exciting hours of recreation and can unearth riches beyond anyone’s wildest imagination.

### Instructions

Start your search near water, preferable upstream to eliminate mud from digging operations.

1. Ground balance your detector to the magnetic iron content of the search area in accordance with manufacture’s in-



structions. This is quite easy with Garret's Scorpion Gold Stinger or any of its CX computerized detectors with microprocessor controls.

2. Scan slowly and examine every target. This will not be as onerous a task as it might sound to a metal detector enthusiast. Because you are scanning in remote areas, you should encounter few familiar "Junk Metal" targets.
3. When you have found and precisely pinpointed a target, slip a shovel under it and place all material in a plastic gold pan. If the target is located in a bedrock formation, use your rock hammer and smaller bar to dislodge it into the pan for observation.
4. Check the contents further with a metal detector. This is an important reason for using a plastic pan.
5. Follow manufacture's instructions to determine whether your target is conductive. If so, examine it carefully. If you have not found a nugget, you may have located an area where panning can prove lucrative...
6. Continue scanning, and examine every target response carefully. Always use the shovel and gold pan to make certain that tiny nuggets do not wash away or be lost in cracks in the ground.

Modern metal detectors can be used to locate large concentrations of magnetic black sand, which usually indicate locations of gold. When you find such sand, inspect it carefully for gold nuggets. In dry areas the procedure will vary only slightly. Locate the target with your detector, dig carefully with your hands or a small tool, being careful not to damage to possible nugget.

Identify and examine the target carefully, as described above.

Metal detector earphones are an advantage in most areas since small nuggets generate only faint response. It is best to dig or investigate visually all targets unless they can be identified absolutely as "Hot Rocks". Electronic discrimination of modern detectors is a valuable aid in such Identification.

Areas with small, loose material make visual identification of targets more difficult. When electronic responses. When you identify a small target in the pan, use dry panning, first to reduce contents. Then, grasp a handful of the pan's remaining contents with your hand (which must be free of rings and other metallic jewelry) and pass your hand over the detector's search coil. Make certain your detector is tuned correctly and move your hand containing the material across its coil. Continue testing material until your hand responds. Then, place contents that generated the response into a can to avoid losing the target. Contents of the plastic cup can be inspected in the same manner.

Cracks and other bedrock sections where gold may be trapped should be inspected with a detector in a similar manner. More detailed instructions are contained in "You Can Find Gold with a Metal Detector" From Ram.

In desert areas where medium to large nuggets occur and water for testing them is scarce, the metal detector provides the easiest method of recovery. The introduction of modern VLF metal detectors has resulted in fantastic success stories. Natural elements continually erode mountains, allowing rich deposits to surface. Once a gold nugget of sufficient size becomes exposed, it can be discovered by a metal detector. These nuggets are rarely detectable by sight alone, and the absence of water leaves electronic detection as the surest and most effective method. Streams can be a valuable source of nuggets. In heavily mineralized areas where productive mines are located, rich ore specimens are often deposited in streams by natural elements. All targets should be carefully examined before assuming one to be a "Hot Rock" valuable antique coins can often be found in streams of old mining districts. The silver-producing areas of Mexico also produce large nuggets that can be easily recovered from creeks and rivers. Small streams created by the melting of large glaciers in Alaska and Western Canada often contain nuggets easily found with modern detectors.

Large nuggets encrusted with a black or dark coating have been found, particularly on mountain tops. It is believed that volcanic actions or oxidation of other minerals and materials created the black coating with which the gold is encrusted. Commonly called "Volcanic Gold" or "Black Nuggets", such discoveries represent a fantastic opportunity for the prospector and are almost impossible to locate except with electronic detectors

## Field Searching

The term *Field Searching* could easily cover the entire spectrum of prospecting. Because the weekend prospector seeks results with a minimum of effort, we will limit our discussion to areas and conditions most commonly occurring and producing positive results. Remember that volumes have been written concerning most major geographic areas where large discoveries have been made. Technical manuals detailing these discoveries, however, are directed primarily at professional prospectors and others in the mining field. Suggestions in this booklet are quite simple by comparison, yet they include procedures used by most successful prospectors today.

In field searching, the successful weekend prospector takes full advantage of the assistance provided by both man and nature in years and centuries past, utilizing the most modern electronic methods available. If you will seek out these opportunities to discover and identify precious minerals, you can cram an incredible amount of prospecting into one short weekend.

To further enhance your enjoyment of the hobby learn all you can about the areas where you are searching. Re-

searching can be fun, and it will help you avoid wasting time in fruitless prospecting.

### Instructions

1. Attach your largest search coil to the metal detector.
2. Ground balance your detector according to manufacture's instructions and local conditions. Detector should be operated in an all metal mode and ground balanced precisely.
3. Search the area. Easier said than done! With the detector and its large search coil directly before you, not sweeping, walk across the search area. Establish grid patterns approximately 10 to 20 feet apart.
4. Investigate all target responses. Because iron deposits often contain valuable minerals, both gold and iron "Hot Rock" indications should be investigated. Discrimination features on modern detectors let you determine if a target signal indicates a non-ferrous, highly conductive vein of ore or of a magnetic iron dike that is only faintly conductive. It can also indicate whether an iron deposit contains other minerals of interest to the prospector.

Complete instructions for field searching are contained in Charles Garrett's "You Can Find Gold with a Metal Detector", which can be ordered.

## Old Mines

Old mines, tunnels and other areas of underground exploration can offer a bonanza to the electronic prospector. This is not meant to exclude newer mines, but the newer locations are likelier to have undergone electronic detection. In those older mines that were abandoned decades ago, however, all the hard work of earth moving has already been completed. It is possible that the original operators missed a vein or "Pocket" by inches.

In fact, even if you examine only a few inches deep in the floors, walls and ceilings of an abandoned mine you will have prospected more cubic yardage than the original miners who moved tons of earth and rock.

Caution: old mines are dangerous. Always be careful with working around them, and never enter one alone.

In mining districts where rich gold pockets were common, secondary enrichments very often occurred. This phenomenon was caused by the deposit's being leached or decomposed, causing gold values to become trapped far away from the original pocket. Such a fine deposit was rarely visible and will usually cause only a slight audio response on the finest detector. In fact, fine gold is sometimes not conclusive enough to cause any audible response on a detector unless it is a high quality, modern instrument.

In Mexico literally tons of pure native silver have been recovered from old Spanish mines with the aid of metal detectors. The almost-pure silver was unidentifiable with the naked eye because it was slightly covered. Unfortunately, access and resale possibilities in Mexico present great difficulties, making a discussion of electronic detecting in this rich area a moot point.

Arizona mountain ranges are rich in native silver and produce good results for those whose research helps them locate conductive ore patterns. Canadian silver mines in the Cobalt district offer unlimited opportunities to the electronic prospector. The silver here is almost pure and in a native conductive state. The only remaining obstacle is obtaining permission to inspect and remove ore samples from abandoned mines. Sallow gold mines in Australia and New Zealand are producing fantastic finds when reworked with metal detectors.

Prospecting permits are required in Canada and Australia. Obtaining one is a simple procedure with the cost only a few dollars. Do not fail to obtain a permit.

## Mine Searching Instructions

Select a modern metal detector, which will be capable of canceling iron minerals. Such a quality detector will also be able to identify ferrous and non-ferrous deposits and measure their conductivity.

1. attach a large search coil to the detector, which will be capable of canceling iron minerals.
2. Ground balance the detector for local conditions in accordance with manufactures instructions.
3. Search the area with a slow scanning motion of the search coil. Make sure the detector remains in the same position relative to your body to prevent false signals coming from your light, shovel or other tools and metallic items. The search coil should normally be six inches to one foot away from the search area, but this distance can be altered in relation to the presence of magnetic iron. False signals can be caused by uneven surface area. Pay close attention to the roof because an exposed piece of rich ore could have been left there. Also scan the floor carefully. If a mine was producing high grade ore, the floor will always contain a few small but rich specimens.
4. Investigate all targets! Often a deposit may be only slightly conductive but still be enormously rich. When a target is detected, use the detector's discrimination feature to determine its content. The target may be difficult to examine

because of small pieces of iron, tools, blasting caps or other refuse present. If so, a specimen should be removed by hand and examined with the detector and its coil in a prone position.

5. Always obtain specimens when in doubt. Often the target can be identified as worthless iron, but specimens should be obtained with the rock hammer or small bar for later examination.

Ground balance the detector for local conditions in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

## Mine Dumps

The term "Ore Dump" generally refers to that location where the richest ore from a mine or mines was stored prior to milling or transportation from the site. Other than desert areas where electronic prospectors are achieving amazing results locating large gold nuggets, the most profitable areas for find gold with a metal detector are the old ore dumps where rich specimens might have been overlooked for one reason or another. Someone else has completed the work here of digging out the material from beneath the earth. Your chore is but to analyze it!

Native silver will often be electronically detected within worthless rock which can be burst to expose the almost pure specimen. Gold nuggets can also be found. They are hard to spot visually and will require bursting larger pieces of rock for hand-testing small specimens with the detector in a prone position. Even the faintest responses can then be readily interpreted.

In the United States, Canada and Mexico where gold and silver often occurred in the almost pure, native state, searching old mine dumps with a modern metal detector is often the most productive type of weekend prospecting. Large specimens with almost pure metallic content and weighing several pounds are being recovered daily at dumps by prospectors using metal detectors. You can see many of these specimens on display in museums and prospecting shops.

## Dump Searching Instructions

1. Attach a medium or large search coil to a modern metal detector.
2. Ground balance the detector for local conditions in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
3. Search the area by sweeping your search coil in the dump at a height of about four inches to one foot, depending on the amount of interference encountered from magnetic iron in the rocks.
4. Investigate target responses. When targets are located, dig or chip them out and isolate them for further testing. Place the detector in a prone position and determine if the target is conductive or a worthless "Hot Rock" by using the Discriminate mode on your detector. Accuracy is not always possible with on-site inspection, but it can be helpful, especially if you will familiarize yourself with different ores and metals known to be present in the area you are searching. Always test target samples for conductivity with the detector lying down on a non-metallic surface.
5. Place specimens in an ore bag and bring them home for better evaluation, "Hot Rocks" will usually be rejected at the dump through use of just a small amount of discrimination. When visual inspection indicated that a target is located in a larger worthless rock, use your rock hammer to break out the target. This will avoid the necessity of transporting large amounts of worthless material.

## Dredge Tailings

Entire river valleys have been dredged by large mining operations. Rocks discarded because they were too large for the trammel sometimes contained nuggets. At other times fine gold and nuggets were concealed in large clay and mud balls.

This gold, still in its ancient protective disguise, now lies in large piles along the banks of these streams... awaiting your modern metal detector. Select an area that has produced large nuggets and one that presents easy access. Be especially attentive on wet days of when piles are wet because specimens are often easily visible at these times. I once recovered a gold nugget that weighed 2½ pounds from the dredge tailings of one of the better known mining districts.

## Search Instructions

1. Use a medium or small search coil on a modern metal detector.
2. Ground balance the detector for local conditions in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
3. Search pile. Often small pieces of junk iron will be found in dredge tailings along with "Hot Rocks". Identification should never be attempted casually; carefully investigate every target signal. Magnetic iron content of heavily mineralized areas present too many possibilities for error.
4. Dig out your target for examination. In dredge tailings be very careful in removing rocks that cover a target. Con-

tinually check with your detector for responses as you expose it. Because of all the loose rocks, use a plastic gold pan to slip under the target area and further isolate your target in the pan.

## Bench Testing

There are three basic methods for examining rock specimens:

\*Visual (In the field)

\*Bench Testing (With a metal detector)

\*Acid Tests (Definitely not recommended for amateurs)

Bench testing, there, not only offers a simple method of determining metallic content and monetary value of an ore specimen but presents the *only* method beyond visual examination. Of course, you must use a modern metal detector that with ground balance and discrimination capable of correctly identifying metal conductivity in relation to the non-conductivity of magnetic iron.

1. Lay your detector on a non-metallic surface and use a small search coil.
2. Adjust your detector to its Discriminate mode with controls set at “zero” discrimination.
3. To determine the conductivity of your sample bring it across the search coil. Gradually increase discrimination until you get a no signal. Responses will help you decide whether your sample is basically a conductive (metallic) substance or magnetic iron.

Further instructions on bench testing can be found in most of the books from Ram Publishing Company that you can order. I will especially recommend “You Can Find Gold with a Metal Detector and Modern Metal Detectors” by Charles Garret.

## Black Sand

The term “Black Sand” has been used several times in this paper, and some of you are wondering just exactly what is means. Black sands is simply the accumulation of several minerals, with each weighing more (Having a higher specific gravity) than the gravel or dirt in which they have become deposited... Sometimes they contain great values; sometimes they are worthless. Granular sizes will also vary, depending primarily on iron deposits in the area.

A variety of minerals other than magnetic iron ore can usually be found in black sand concentrates, including gold, silver, platinum, tungsten, mercury, lead, galena, manganese and zinc. Also to be found are such gemstones as garnets and sapphires along with rare earth minerals.

Never discard black sand until you are convinced that no further gold can be extracted profitable. Remember, some firms purchase concentrates based on their assayed value.

## Metal Detectors

Be confident that you can find gold with a metal detector! Both amateur and professional prospectors are accomplishing this daily. But, also understand that certain promoters and manufacturers have misled hobbyists into believing that any type of metal detector can locate some sort of gold whether it be nuggets, placer gold or ore veins... just about any place they want you to search.

This is not true! Two requirements are basic to the discovery of gold with a metal detector.

1. You should be using a modern metal detector with precise ground balancing capabilities and proper, factory-calibrated discrimination.
2. You should always begin by looking in locations where gold is *known to exist*.

## Instructions

1. Always hunt with a metal detector (and pan, too) in areas where gold has already been found. Only after you have gained experience should you try to explore “NEW” territory with a metal detector. Gold discovery will probably come more quickly in known gold-producing areas.
2. Election prospecting requires techniques that coin hunters or beach combers have probably not encountered. Try to develop these techniques by working with a pro or from literature listed in this booklet to become successful more rapidly. “Trial and error” in the field can be slow and painful learning process... expensive too!
3. Familiarize yourself with various types of ores and other rocks in the area you are searching. Do this by bench testing with factory-calibrated equipment. Learn how your detector recognizes the different ores you can expect to find.
4. Always hunt in the ALL METAL mode and dig every target! Of course, you can try to check out your finds with factory-calibrated discrimination before you dig.
5. Be Patient.



**Leon Hillman; Craig Tucker; David Bitts; et. al., v. California Department of Fish and Game**

The lawsuit claimed that the State cannot use taxpayer funds to run the suction dredging program because the program was not in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Judge Roesch ruled in favor of the plaintiffs on July 9, 2009. His order stated that the California Department of Fish & Game was barred from using General Fund money to administer the suction dredge program.

Fish & Game countered that General Fund money was not being utilized to run the program. They sent a letter to Judge Roesch requesting clarification and continued issuing suction dredge permits.

On Monday, July 27, a hearing was held in Alameda County Superior Court to clarify Judge Roesch's order. Roesch ordered the State to stop issuing permits.

Fish & Game stopped issuing suction dredge permits following Judge Roesch's order on July 27.

**SB 670: The bill to halt suction dredging permits until a new EIR is completed**

We recently learned the bill was not delivered to the governor's desk until 11:30am on July 27, 2009 by the legislature. He has 12 days to sign or veto the bill, or he can let the 12 days elapse and the bill will become law.

A concerted effort has been made to educate staff in the governor's office as to how this bill would impact families, small businesses and industries in the State. Staff has also been advised of the Takings issues involved.

**There is Some Good News**

Miners in California, and those who benefit from their endeavors, are more united than they have been in years. Over 6,000 comments from concerned miners, businesses and industry were hand-delivered to the governor's office. This does not include comments that were sent directly to the governor.

A revised Economic Impact Report was completed and submitted to the governor, which clearly demonstrates that suction gold dredgers are major contributors to the California economy. The report documents verifiable contributions of \$65.46 million to the State economy in 2008. The report lists additional estimated economic impacts that could push the total well above \$100 million.

Several retired government scientists with experience in the fields of biology, fisheries management and water have stepped forward to debunk the claims that suction gold dredging is harmful to fish and their habitat.

We already mentioned Joseph C. Greene in last month's issue. He's a retired US EPA research biologist with 30 years experience. After reviewing the studies available on suction gold dredging and the environment, he refuted claims that dredging is harmful and concluded that the dispute has little to do with harm to endangered fish but rather is centered on power and control of California's waterways.

Claudia Wise is a former physical scientist/chemist who retired in 2006 after 32 years of service with EPA. Wise has relevant experience with scientific projects involving fish toxicology, salmon restoration, urban fish populations, water temperature and global climate change on her resumé.

Here are a few excerpts from Wise's letter to Governor Schwarzenegger:

- Dozens of peer-reviewed journal articles, some commissioned by the USEPA, USGS, CDFG, Corp of Engineers, and many more from universities support suction dredging as having de minimis effects or no significant effect on the environment they are used in.
- California Department of Fish and Game already regulates the miners out of the waterways during important life events for the salmon. That includes during spawning season when redds are present.
- It is well known that suction dredging causes little or no environmental harm to fish and biota; what many overlook are the many benefits that dredging provides such as increased spawning gravels, dredge made refugia, and yes, mercury remediation to name a few.

- I have been involved in temperature surveys on the Klamath River in California in regards to suction dredge activity and existing conditions of refugia. We have found specified natural refugia to be no better in many cases to that of dredge made refugia.
- Dredge holes can provide a holding place for fish as they pass up the waterway on their migration path to and from the ocean providing a place to get out of the faster currents to rest. Some of these dredge holes may also be cooler due to ground water seepage if the holes are deep enough. This leads to development of additional areas of needed refugia.
- The mining community of today is, in my opinion, the only group that is in a position with the technology to help with the removal of lead and mercury at a very economical price to the public. Any residual mercury remaining after dredging a location is that much less to worry about.
- In reviewing Humphrey's (2005) comments regarding possible problems associated with collecting mercury via suction dredging methods, it is right to look to the suction dredge community for help locating hotspots and removing mercury from the river systems. In my opinion the data provided in the report by Humphrey's (2005) did not demonstrate any clear conclusions that would prohibit the State from allowing this activity. On the contrary, in the discussion of results it was stated that a suction dredge in the American River was able to collect 98 percent of the measured mercury processed through the dredge. The amount of mercury collected may have been higher if the investigators had been using a dredge with the modern jet flare design. Even 98 percent is a huge plus for the environment and it would be irresponsible to not allow mercury to be removed from the rivers and streams whenever it is found.
- If not collected the mercury is guaranteed to end up farther downstream, and eventually in the delta or the bay, where methylation is a real environmental problem. In my opinion it would be a highly irresponsible management practice to leave a large portion of mercury in the rivers and streams because of unrealistic concerns for the lesser amount moving only a short distance away from an operating dredge. Most likely if floured the movement of fine mercury would extend no farther than 50-feet off the end of the sluice box. That would relate to the distance a turbidity plume might extend downstream from a small-scale suction dredge.
- However, if the mercury was left in place the next storm event would surely move it downstream closer to, and eventually into, the bay and delta.
- There was no reason, last year, to sign AB1032 into law and there is no reason to sign Bill 670 into law this year. I respectfully ask that you not add further to the problems related to increased government regulation where none is warranted. Please allow California Fish and Game to do their job. They are already regulating suction dredging adequately to protect fish. The court has ordered California Department of Fish and Game to prove suction dredging creates significant harm before changing the mining regulations.
- I respectfully ask that you VETO bill 670.

#### **What's Next**

An appeal on the Alameda case is pending. There is a possibility that an appeal could place the decision on hold until the appeal is settled. In the meantime, suction dredgers with permits will continue to operate for the remainder of this dredging season.

The State has begun the process of developing new suction dredge regulations and a new Environmental Impact Report. According to Kirsten Macintyre, communications manager for Fish & Game, public hearings and scoping meetings have been tentatively scheduled. We will provide you with the exact locations and times when available, but here is the proposed schedule:

- Public Scoping Meetings: Fresno (11/17/09); Sacramento (11/18/09); Redding (11/19/09)
- Public Hearings: Fresno (9/8/10); Sacramento (9/9/10); Redding (9/10/10)

According to Macintyre, the Notice of Determination and CEQA findings will likely be completed in summer 2011.

A lawsuit against the State has been prepared. It will not be filed until Governor Schwarzenegger makes his decision on SB 670. After discussions with Jerry Hobbs of Public Lands for the People and their attorneys, it was decided that federal court would be the best venue to correct this situation if necessary.

[http://www.icmj.com/news-detail.php?id=36&keywords=Current\\_Status\\_of\\_Suction\\_Gold\\_Dredging\\_in\\_California](http://www.icmj.com/news-detail.php?id=36&keywords=Current_Status_of_Suction_Gold_Dredging_in_California)  
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Thank You to Scott Harn, Editor of ICMJ to print these articles!

Application To : Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada, Inc.  
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I / we, the undersigned, ( hereafter referred to as participant ) assume all risk and/or hazards associated with participant's involvement in the Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada Inc., a prospecting club. Participants agree to indemnify and HOLD HARMLESS all club officers, sponsors, and/or other third, fourth, etc., parties involved in club activities. Participants realize that metal detecting, gold prospecting, and associated activities can be dangerous. The terrain can be hazardous and there may be wild or domesticated animals and snakes present. Some locations may have open shafts, pits, and tunnels. Participants assume animals and snakes present. Participants assume all responsibility by signing below.

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**September 2nd, 2009.**

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