

INFORMATION ABOUT:

Rockhounding on Public Lands



U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

5353 Yellowstone Road
P.O. Box 1828
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003-1828

Telephone 307-775-6256
Fax 307-775-6129

WHERE IS COLLECTION PERMISSIBLE?

Rockhounding is recognized as a legitimate recreational pursuit on nearly all of the 17.8 million acres of public land in Wyoming. These public lands administered by the BLM are open to everyone, to take limited amounts of rock material for noncommercial purposes without charge. Maps showing the location of public lands in Wyoming can be obtained from this office or the field offices (for addresses see information handout "WYNF-0007, BLM Offices in Wyoming"). You should check with the BLM field offices to become familiar with local procedures, policies and areas with authorized restrictions.

NO HISTORIC ARTIFACTS, PLEASE

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 and the Antiquities Act of 1906 are designed to protect our Nation's cultural resources. These laws prohibit the unauthorized excavation, removal, damage, or alteration of any archaeological and historical site or object. Petroglyphs, human graves, old dwellings, pottery, stone tools, arrowheads, and other remains of Indians and early inhabitants are protected by law because they may provide important links to our past.

HOW ABOUT FOSSILS?

Fossil collecting has its own set of rules. Vertebrate fossils (which includes all bones and teeth) are off limits to rockhounders, but invertebrate and plant fossils that are not of special scientific interest may be collected in reasonable amounts for personal use. No fossils collected from public land can be sold, traded, or bartered. Please see the pamphlet titled Fossils on America's Public Lands available at BLM offices.

MAY PETRIFIED WOOD BE COLLECTED?

Hobby collection has special rules. Please see Fossils on America's Public Lands pamphlet. A material site contract must be obtained from a BLM office for collection of more than 250 pounds a year, or for commercial use.

COLLECTED BUT NOT DESTROYED . . .

Explosives or power equipment must not be used in excavating or removing petrified wood, and may apply to other collecting. Off-road vehicle use may also be restricted. Also, fossil and/or mineral collecting may be restricted or prohibited in some areas to allow dedication of the land for another purpose. Such restrictions follow official notice in the Federal Register and the areas are posted.