

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1997

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

The summer is about half gone already and I hope that you all are getting out to collect while the weather is good. I have made a few trips but of course not as many as I would like. So far this has been a decent collecting season and I hope that it continues. I hope all of us will have something to brag about when we meet at the symposium.

Speaking of collecting, please read the article that Ray Lasmanis sent about collecting on Forest Service land. We will see more regulations in the near future as budget restrictions and population pressures impact the Federal lands. It is conceivable in the future that all collecting will be severely restricted or even prohibited unless we all keep an eye out for our rights.

I have always paid for my FM dues during the symposium and I am sure that the majority of members have also paid at this time. However, I have noticed that not all members are current in their dues. Please remember that our chapter has costs that are covered by the dues, such as bulletin expenses and a portion of the symposium. Please keep current on your dues so that we can continue to be a viable organization.

The June meeting was held at the Rice Mineral Museum in Hillsboro, Oregon. A short business meeting was followed by a viewing of the treasures on display. It was moved and seconded that the symposium remain in the Seattle/Tacoma area, and that some effort would be made to find a larger facility at a comparable cost. Information was given on the upcoming symposium. Thanks to the Rice Museum for their hospitality. The next business meeting will be held during the symposium in September.

The 23rd annual symposium plans are going along very well and Mark Mauthner has lined up some great speakers. Since we have decided to keep the show in the Seattle area please make sure to attend this event.

Another item in this issue is the information on the passes now required for use of the National Forest in our area. I have included copies of brochures on the Snoqualmie-Mt. Baker and the Okanogan regions. Be aware that the rangers have already started to issue violations. Hopefully this will go the way of the last attempt at double pay for our use of our lands but I will comply with the law until it is changed. I believe the passes will be for sale at the offices in Sedro-Woolley and at Glacier, as well as those listed.

Montana Field Trip:

On July 8, the NW chapter of FM rendezvoused at the home of Joan and Bryant Harris in Missoula, MT. 5 members viewed Bryant's fabulous California pegmatite collection, and we were also given a chance to purchase select pieces from his stock.

We then proceeded to the Sally Ann claim south of Elliston, MT to dig for quartz crystals. More members joined us at this locality and everyone seemed to have a good time and collected quite a variety of quartz, including scepters, Japan Law twins, and clear and smoky singles. Ray Lasmanis dug a few nice Amethyst/Smoky scepters from his pocket. The weather was mixed with some showers and a good frost on our last night in camp.

On Friday we all traveled to Butte for their annual show, where three NW members set up cases. I had a case of Walker Valley, Wa. specimens, John and Gloria Cornish had a case of Northwest minerals and fossils, and George Downey had a case of opal. Three chapter members also presented talks at the Butte Mineral Collectors symposium held in conjunction with the show. I talked on the Walker Valley area, John Cornish talked on recent activity at NW localities, and Lanny Ream talked about computer programs and the internet related to minerals. This was my first visit to the Butte mineral show and I did make the acquaintance of several fellow collectors from the Butte area. The Sunday field trip was well attended by NW chapter members and we collected Diopside, Garnet, Idocrase, Feldspar, and Actinolite from a skarn and pegmatite area in the Pipestone Pass area SE of Butte.

Sunday night after the show closed we proceeded to Crystal Park and dug for various quartz crystals. In all, thirteen NW members attended various portions of the trip. I would like to thank John Cornish for making all arrangements for this fun gathering. John also invited about 3 billion mosquitoes for which I won't thank him.

Part of a conversation overheard at the Sally Ann digs:

George: "What colors amethyst?"

John: "Purple, George"

George: "I know that. (Quietly), to Jason: What colors amethyst?"

Jason: "Purple!"

Our annual trip to Washington Pass is on for the 8th, 9th, and 10th of August. Cheryl has reserved several sites at the Kilpuck Campground just east of the Washington Pass area for FM members for Friday and Saturday nights. Cleanup is on Saturday morning with collecting in the batholith on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Be sure to send Cheryl a note or leave a message so that she can keep a spot open for you. This is a great time and you can have fun picking up garbage and collect rare mineral specimens too!

Bob Smith is chairing the committee to select the next group of officers for the chapter. The election will be held during the symposium. If you have some input or would like to be considered for an office please contact Bob or his committeeman John Cornish. Bob's number is 206-784-7932.

FM Chapter notes:

I am now receiving newsletters from other chapters and will publish notes from these as I get them.

The Pennsylvania Chapter will host their symposium on Carbonates on October 24, 25, and 26. The contact person is George Rambo at 302-798-4163.

The Colorado Chapter is sponsoring the updated publication of Minerals of Colorado. See the attached flier in this issue.

Rockhounding, Mineral Collecting, and Our National Forests

("unofficial" advice and observation for the mineral enthusiast looking at National Forest lands...)

by: John Nichols, Forest Geologist, Ouachita National Forest

February 1997

The US Forest Service: The US Forest Service is a federal agency under the US Department of Agriculture. The Forest Service is responsible for managing 191,000,000 acres of federal lands contained within 156 National Forests and 19 National Grasslands, located in 40 States from Alaska to Florida, and in Puerto Rico. Each National Forest is divided into units called "Ranger Districts". The Forest lands within each Ranger District are the responsibility of the line officer called the "District Ranger", who in turn is under the "Forest Supervisor" for each Forest. *For example, the Ouachita National Forest in Arkansas and Oklahoma - the oldest and largest in the Southeast - is 1.6 million acres and divided into 12 Ranger Districts. The Ranger District Offices are located across the Forest. The Headquarters for the Ouachita National Forest is the Forest Supervisors Office in Hot Springs, Arkansas.*

National Forest Management: The Forest Service is responsible for managing a wide variety of resources on the National Forests including: recreation, timber, fish, wildlife, soils, threatened and endangered species, mining, cultural resources, water, air quality, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers. While management of one resource often complements management of other resources, sometimes just the opposite occurs creating interesting challenges in balanced management. *For example, wilderness management precludes many surface impacting activities, yet there are some mining rights cases that do involve surface impacting activities within wilderness areas.* The public's varied desires for different uses on National Forest lands, as expressed through the numerous laws governing how those lands are to be managed, are extensive. *For every citizen who demands they be managed in one way there are many others with very different and often conflicting desires.*

Mineral Collecting on National Forests: Collecting minerals on National Forest lands can be both exciting and challenging. Many developed and undeveloped opportunities already exist to collect rock and mineral specimens. *For example, the Beaverhead National Forest in Montana, the St. Joe in Idaho, and the Ouachita National Forest in Arkansas and Oklahoma, all have developed public mineral collecting locations.* Many National Forests provide information on general specimen locations within the Forest and on Forest policy and rules for the rockhounder and mineral collector. *For example, the Chugach National Forest in Alaska, the Wallowa-Whitman in Oregon, and the Prescott in Arizona are some Forests with histories of placer gold mining and as such these Forests offer informative materials on panning and suction dredging for gold.*

Restricted Access: The old axiom "Gold Is Where You Find It" is true for all minerals. Whether it is quartz crystal in Arkansas, Garnets in Idaho, ruby in North Carolina, or Thundereggs in Oregon, the collector and rockhounder must go to where the minerals are. If an area is unavailable to the collector, the mineral specimens that may be within that area will go undiscovered. This results not only in a loss to the mineral collecting community, but often to the academic and scientific community as well. Areas on National Forests that generally are not available for minerals activities include wildernesses and designated "wild" portions of rivers that Congress has determined will be very selectively managed. Other areas include lands that Congress has either excluded mineral collecting outright, or have simply not given the Forest Service authority to manage for mineral collecting. It is important for the mineral collector and rockhounder to understand Congress's direction, based on public mandate, for managing the National Forests and how the Forest Service functions in following that direction.

It's "The Law" for the Miner: Some mineral collectors and rockhounters desiring to operate on National Forests may intend to sell the specimens they remove or to conduct what may become significant surface disturbing operations. These collectors and rockhounters should become familiar with the mining laws that provide for and govern mining related activities on National Forests. The mining laws are designed primarily for commercial type exploration and production operations, and require the operator to submit mining plans for reviews and approvals. Under these laws the minerals are removed with the least impact to other resources and the lands are reclaimed by the operator for other uses when mining is completed. These laws offer certain advantages and rights that many mineral clubs and individual collectors often are also willing to take advantage of even though they result in some extra effort and expense.

It's "No Law" (yet) for the Collector: Aside from the mining laws, at this time there is no law that provides a specific "right" for mineral collectors and rockhounds to collect specimens from federal lands such as National Forests. However, there are some "open doors", for example:

* The Organic Act of 1897, one of the National Forest creation acts, provided authority to "...make such rules and regulations and establish such service as will...regulate their occupancy and use and to preserve the forests thereon from destruction."

Accessing federal minerals is an important "use" of National Forest lands to many people.

* The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) provided that "...the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that where appropriate will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use."

FLPMA calls for a balance among all uses to "manage", "protect", "preserve" and "provide", as do other laws such as the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976.

The "Activity" of Collecting: Generally, the activity of collecting minerals on National Forests does not "significantly" impact (disturb) other Forest resources. Consequently, the collector will often find that simply contacting the District Ranger and explaining what they would like to do is all that is necessary to receive "permission" to conduct their desired activity on the Forest. *For example, typical mineral collecting and rockhounding activities often involves digging and chipping with tools such as small garden trowels, scrapers, and rock hammers. Usually the District Ranger is not concerned with this type of low level impact and will often simply thank the person for contacting the Forest Service and wish them well in their endeavors.* In those cases where the collecting activity could lead to greater resource impacts, the District Ranger may require a written proposal from the parties for formal review and evaluation. *For example, a mineral club may want to use a backhoe to remove overburden (dirt) and expose so members can collect fresh mineral specimens on a club outing. The District Ranger will want more information on the collecting locality so that Forest resource specialists can review the area to understand what impacts may occur to other resources. Club officers in turn will want to provide that information well in advance of the planned trip to give the Ranger adequate time for the evaluation.* The more surface impact being proposed, generally the more intense the evaluation becomes. A District Ranger "Approval" to operate on the Forest is a written agreement (letter, contract, permit, etc.) between the Ranger and the operator and includes whom the responsible party will be, how they will reclaim the impact, and also usually requires a reclamation bond to ensure that they complete all necessary reclamation.

For the Benefit of "Science": Many mineral collectors and mineral collecting organizations invest much of their effort in the search and recovery of mineral specimens for educational and scientific purposes. These collectors may publish articles or statements about the significance of their finds in professional and/or lay publications (club magazines and journals). It is important for the collector to help the District Ranger understand that the site the collector wants to access on the Forest is important for these reasons as well. *For example, a scientific or academic endeavor could result in the District Ranger allowing use of a closed road to facilitate temporary access to a collecting locality, or directing resource specialists to evaluate potential impacts from the proposed endeavor ahead of other District resource work they must do.*

CONCLUSION: The key to mineral collecting and rockhounding on our National Forests is communication: making contact and talking with the local District Ranger. Not only will the collector find out what the policies and rules are, but they will discover that the Forest Service can provide many other practical resources such as maps, information on camping and other recreational activities, and other items of interest on the Forest. Some Forests have Geologists or Mining Engineers on their staff, usually located in the Forest Supervisors Office. The Forest Geologist can often provide information on Forest policy and procedure, facilitate communications with the District Ranger, and provide invaluable minerals, geology, and reference information to the rockhoulder.

Definitions (General and Non-binding...)	
Rockhounds: <i>Those persons interested in the non-commercial search for and removal of rocks and minerals for personal purposes, typically using only small hand tools.</i>	Mineral Specimen Collectors: <i>Those persons interested in collecting unique mineral specimens primarily for scientific or academic interests, and often publishing the results.</i>

Recreational Fee Demonstration Program

What is this all about?

The Okanogan National Forest is one of 50 selected sites participating nation wide. For the next three years the forest will require a pass for overnight parking or camping on Okanogan National Forest land west of the Okanogan River.

A pass is required April 15 through November 15, per vehicle, for overnight (10 pm - 6 am) camping or parking on Okanogan National Forest land west of the Okanogan River.

Prices: \$5.00 for One Night Pass
\$10.00 for Three Night Pass
\$25.00 for Season Pass

Season pass is valid for two vehicles registered to the same owner(s), but can only be used on one vehicle at time.

A pass is not required for day use.

Why?

Congress recently authorized the Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a fee program to test collecting, retaining, and reinvesting user-fees.

Where can I buy a Pass?

Conconully:

Hurt's Market, (509) 826-2027

Loomis:

Loomis Grocery & Sport, 10 East Palmer Avenue, (509) 223-3195

Mazama:

Freestone Inn Activity Ctr at Wilson Ranch, 17798 Hwy 20, (509) 996-2752
Mazama Mountaineering, 42 Lost River Road, (509) 996-3802

Okanogan:

Bike Shop, 137 2nd Avenue South, (509) 422-0710
Okanogan National Forest Headquarters, 1240 S 2nd Ave, (509) 826-3275

Omak:

Cascade Toy-N-Sport, 16 South Main Street, (509) 826-4148
Conoco - Partners Mini-Market, 111 East Riverside Drive, (509) 826-4279
Texaco - Food Mart, 800 East Riverside Drive, (509) 826-2965
Wal-Mart, 900 Engh Road, (509) 826-6002

Oroville:

Prince's Center, 1000, 23rd Street, (509) 476-3651

Pateros:

Chevron - Super Stop and RV Park, 245 Lakeshore Drive, (509) 923-2200

Tonasket:

Conoco - The Junction, 509 South Whitcomb Avenue, (509) 486-1800
Tonasket Ranger District, 1 West Winesap, (509) 486-2186

Twisp:

Exxon - The Train Station Mini Market, Highway 20, (509) 997-8782
Texaco - Hanks Mini Market, E412 Highway 20, (509) 997-4332
Methow Valley Ranger District, 502 Glover, (509) 996-2131

Winthrop:

Conoco - Partners Mini Market, Highway 20, (509) 996-2005
Winthrop Mountain Sport, 257 Riverside, (509) 996-2886
Methow Valley Visitor Center, Building 49, Highway 20, (509) 996-4000

Regional Trail-Park Passes will be sold at these offices.





Trails For Generations

TRAIL PARK PASSES

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Spring 1997

- **Will I need a Trail Park Pass at Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest trailheads?**

Beginning this summer, a Trail Park Pass will be required for parking at trailheads on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, with the exception of the Heather Meadows area at Mt. Baker (for which a separate parking fee is being proposed). Passes will be required year-round. * (See note below.)

- **How much will the Trail Park Pass cost?**

It will cost \$3 for a day pass or \$25 for an annual pass. Individuals who have a Golden Age or Golden Access Passport will be able to buy a Trail Park Pass for half price. (The pass will be a windshield sticker, similar to Sno-Park Permits.)

- **Where and when can I buy a Trail Park Pass?**

They will be sold at participating National Forest offices and visitor centers. Arrangements are also being made with local community vendors and businesses to sell the passes. (We're exploring options for making passes available through the mail and on the internet too.) Details of sale locations will be announced - passes are expected to be available in late May.

- **If I need to take two vehicles to the trailhead, do I have to buy two passes?**

For this type of situation, an annual "family" pass will be available for an additional \$5 at the time of purchase of a full-price annual pass. No discount is available for day passes.

- **Are Trail Park Passes transferable?**

The annual pass and "family" pass will be transferable between two vehicles. Day passes will not be transferable.

- **How did this fee program come about?**

The Trail Park Pass is part of an experimental recreation fee program approved by Congress. Fees collected from the pass will supplement shrinking National Forest recreation budgets for trail maintenance.

- **How will the funds be used?**

Eighty percent of the funds will be returned to participating National Forests to fund trailhead and trail maintenance. (This is the first time that fees will be returned to National Forests for on-site maintenance.)

For More Information Please Contact:

**Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie
National Forest**
21905 64th Ave. West
Mountlake Terrace, WA
98043

(425) 775-9702
1-800-627-0062

Mt. Baker Ranger Station
(360) 856-5700

Darrington Ranger Station
(360) 436-1155
(425) 259-7911 (Everett)

Skykomish Ranger Station
(360) 677-2414

North Bend Ranger Station
(425) 888-1421

White River Ranger Station
(360) 825-6585



* Trail Park Passes will also be required at designated trailheads on the Olympic and Wenatchee National Forests in Washington and the Willamette, Deschutes and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests in Oregon. Trail Park Passes bought on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest will be honored at designated trailheads in these other five National Forests.

