Rockhound Soap Box

By John Martin AFMS Conservation and Legislation Committee

As far as legislation regarding Public Lands and Recreational Rockhounding goes for 2019, all of the damage was accomplished with the passage of S 47 which included most of the bills introduced in the 2019 session of Congress. Since that time in the first quarter of 2019 legislation pertaining to or having an impact on Recreational Rockhounding has been mostly non-existent. If you have paid any attention to what is happening in Washington DC this year, then you know where Congress has been spending their time and your tax money. With that said, I will turn my thoughts to other things of importance. As I was unable to attend the AFMS Meeting in Cedar Rapids this year, I would like to take this time to thank the AFMS for bestowing upon me the AFMS Recognition Award for 2019. I am honored to receive the award and will continue to strive to support the AFMS and Recreational Rockhounding in a manner that will respect the award in the future years. I would like to thank Tony Fender, President of CFMS, who accepted the award on my behalf at the AFMS Convention and Show and presented it to me in California. Once again, I would like to thank the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, its Officers and Directors, Committee Chairs and the seven Regional Federations for without their effort and support Recreational Rockhounding and the Lapidary Arts would not be as they are today and will be in the future. afmsclc@antelecom.net

ALAA Alert - BOLO - Burro Killing in the SoCal Deserts - Reward Offered

by Jennifer Haley, AFMS Historian

Over the past three months, 42 burro carcasses containing gunshot wounds have been found scattered along a 60-mile (95-kilometer) stretch of Interstate 15, the main highway linking Los Angeles to Las Vegas.

The animals, like wild horses, are protected under federal law. Anyone found guilty of harassing, branding or killing one faces a fine of up to $2,000 and a year in jail.

More than that, burros are an enduring symbol of the American Southwest. With their pointy ears and distinctive "Hee-Haw" voices, they evoke a time when their sure-footedness in rocky terrain and ability to carry heavy loads long distances without complaint made them perfect pack animals for prospectors and others.

"Wild horses and burros are an iconic part of the American West and part of our national heritage," William Perry Pendley, BLM's deputy director for policy and programs, said in a statement Friday. "We will pursue every lead until we've arrested and prosecuted those responsible for these cruel, savage deaths, and we welcome the public's help to bring the perpetrator or perpetrators to justice."

The same traits that allowed burros to thrive as pack animals have been ideal for their survival in the modern Mojave Desert, where their diet consists of various plant vegetation and they are able to go for long stretches without water.

As people have encroached on that territory over the years one of their biggest threats has been being hit by cars.

That was until the shootings began in May.

The reward offer is in addition to others of $2,500, $5,000 and $1,000 offered, respectively, by the American Wild Horse Campaign, Return to Freedom and The Cloud Foundation. https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2019-08-23/feds-offer-10-000-reward-for-arrest-of-wild-burro-killers.
The AFMS
Proudly Serving
Seven Regional Federations

Officers:

President
Doug True
2622 Broadwater
Billings, MT 59102
406-670-0506
<truefossils12 at yahoo.com>

President-Elect
David Wayment
PO Box 780791
Sebastian, FL 32978-70791
727-532-6432
<aastainedglass at bellsouth.net>

1st Vice President
Judy Beck
3021 E Country Club Rd
Salina, KS 67401
785-823-7069
<lkbeckfam at gmail.com>

2nd Vice President
Jim Brace-Thompson
7319 Eisenhower St.
Ventura, CA 93003-2511
(805) 659-3577
<jbraceth at roadrunner.com>

3rd Vice President
Cheryl Neary
42 Jefferson Ave
Patchogue, NY 11772
516-449-5341
<ciervo.neary at gmail.com>

4th Vice President
Roger Burford
13603 Short Ave
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
225-400-3719
<scfmsPresident at gmail.com>

5th Vice President
J. C. Moore
25235 No. Illinois 97
Cuba, IL 61427
309-789-6501
<damoore3 at gmail.com>

Secretary
Donna Moore
25235 No. Illinois 97
Cuba, IL 61427
309-789-6501
<MWFSecretary at gmail.com>

Treasurer
Pat LaRue
PO Box 1657
Rialto, CA 92377-1657
909-874-5664
<bplarue at earthlink.net>

From The President
Doug True

This has been a busy Spring for us; after attending the AFMS show in Cedar Rapids we drove back to Quartzsite, Arizona and finished closing our shop. Then we went to San Diego county to our mining claim and worked it for a while. We returned home to Billings, Montana the end of April. Worked our local show May 4 and 5, then off to the Blue Forest in Wyoming for 5 days. We drove to New York and attended the Eastern Federation show and convention. We really enjoyed ourselves and they provided such great hospitality. Attended the show and meetings, did a tour of one of the world-famous florescent collecting areas, the Sterling Mine in New Jersey. Again, thanks to the Orange County club, David and the Eastern clubs for making us feel at home.

Spent a day seeing the beauty of the Niagara Falls, both the US and Canadian sides. Then back to Montana and a week’s fishing in Wyoming.

Now we are in Utah, visited Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks, We have not been to these parks for 53 years (on our Honeymoon, August, 1966). Fun to see the parks from a different perspective. We are on our way to the Rocky Mountain Federation show and Convention at Prescott, Arizona.

In the next several months I will be presenting some ways to help build and/or strengthen your club shows by using social media. Ways to save money, increase attendance, and build your club. Hope you’re having a great Summer

Bulletin Editors’ Contest Article
By Mark Nelson, AFMS BEAC

It’s finally FALL ! Of course, in some parts of North America it’s hard to tell. The leaves are turning gold in some areas, and people in others are battling brush fires. With such a diverse geographical area, there are always plenty of differences!

What unites us, as Editors, is our desire to make our bulletin the best and most interesting that it can be to our readers! To help with that, the American Federation has developed an Editor’s Contest. This is an opportunity for both new and veteran editors, writers, illustrators, doodlers, poets and publishers to submit something they have done this year. This gives us two benefits: It allows us to have experienced judges review and commend our work and to suggest improvements that we may not have considered. It also allows us to see how our work rates among those of similar character in our Federation and international.

When I first submitted my bulletin for my local federation contest, I received an Honorable Mention. I was advised to do two things: Join S.C.R.I.B.E. and seek their bulletin evaluation service, and to compare my bulletin to the AFMS Scoring Sheet that is posted on the AFMS web site. The next year I received top marks in my federation and 6th in the AFMS. I valued the comments that I received at the AFMS level and continued to improve my bulletin. This not only made me proud of my bulletin, but it attracted new members to my club! There are members who said that they remained as members in order to receive the monthly bulletin! This year our editors have a full 12 months of work that they can choose from to submit to their regional federation’s contest. The 2020 AFMS Convention is not until next October. Thus, we have plenty of time to make our bulletins the BEST that they can be! I encourage all Editors to submit bulletins, poetry, articles, drawn and written features and special publications to their local federation contest!

Sometimes this AFMS newsletter does not get mailed to a club editor. If you are a club or federation exec who does get this newsletter, please forward it to your editor. I’d like to see a record turnout of contest submissions this year! Do you have a question about the contest, or anything else? Contact me at mnelsonair@aol.com.
Seeking Multimedia Suggestions for Kids
As I noted in last month’s juniors column, I’ve begun work on updating our AFMS Future Rockhounds of America Badge Manual with a goal of issuing a Fifth Edition in 2020. In the new edition, I especially would like to add more multimedia suggestions as a way of capturing the attention of kids raised on smart phones, the Internet, video games and other interactive media on smart phones, the Internet, video games, and other interactive media. Our current edition offers the occasional link to a recommended website, but with the Fifth Edition, I’d like to add some sort of multimedia connection to each and every one of our 20 badge units.

Can you help? Do you know of any websites, YouTube videos, or other multimedia that we can freely link to or suggest to local leaders of juniors programs? For instance, in the past year, folks have directed me to a really terrific kid-friendly YouTube video that shows how to make a basic wire-wrapped pendant. I’ve also discovered great YouTube videos showing how to polish soft rocks (alabaster, travertine, Petoskey stones) by hand, using different grits of wet/dry sandpaper. And the websites of many natural history museums provide nice clips related to earth history, fossils, gemstones, and more.

Here’s a list of the core topics we cover with our badge units: Rocks & Minerals, Earth Resources, Fossils, Lapidary Arts, Collecting, Showmanship, Communication, Field Trips, Leadership, Earth Processes, Earth in Space (meteors), Gold Panning & Prospecting, Gemstone Lore & Legend, Stone Age Tools & Art, Rocking on the Computer, The World in Miniature (thumbnails & micro-mounts), Special Effects, Fluorescent Minerals, Reaching Across Generations, and Maps. To see the units in full detail, go to http://amfed.org/fra/fra_badge.htm

In addition to new activities, I’d like to update basic info. Have you tried any of the web addresses included in the Manual intended to lead to additional sources of information and activities and, if so, do you have suggestions for new websites to incorporate? Have any of the web addresses expired? Are there additional books, videos, or other resources we might recommend to go along with any of our badge units? Are there ways we might use our AFMS and regional Federation websites to support aspects of the Badge Program?

If you know of a website, a YouTube video, or any other multimedia that we might be able to freely link to for any of the topics noted above, I welcome your good suggestions! I welcome any and all ideas large and small! Please send your thoughts to me via snail-mail, e-mail, or phone:
If you know of a website, a YouTube video, or any other multimedia that we might be able to freely link to for any of the topics noted above, I welcome your good suggestions! Please contact me via snail-mail, e-mail, or phone: 7319 Eisenhower Street, Ventura, CA 93003, jbraceth@roadrunner.com, (805) 659-3577. Here’s to engaging kids with ever more creative ways of learning about our hobby while having fun!

Safety Matters - Is Safety Enough?
By Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair

A Difficult Topic
It is a difficult topic to talk about, especially in polite society. It’s rife with uncomfortable situations. It’s dripping with implications. It’s also lifesaving. What is it? It’s sweat, or rather perspiration.

Our bodies sweat, pardon me, we perspire for numerous reasons. But they all lead to the same result; we lose valuable water, salt, and various other chemicals.

There are times we don’t know we are perspiring. Such as after we have been swinging the 15 pound sledge hammer for a while and the perspiration starts entering our eyes causing us to lose the ability to see what we are trying to hit with the hammer. So, what do we do then? We wipe our brow, dry our eyes, and go back to swinging. We have, after all, a good measure of passion in our hobby.

It’s usually a while later when we decide we are thirsty and take a break to replenish ourselves with a drink of water, but by then, we are already dehydrated. When we are thirsty, we are already dehydrated. Our body is already unbalanced by lack of precious water.

I’d like to make a case for drinking water before we are thirsty, making a case for drinking as we go, rather than waiting till we feel thirsty. When we anticipate engaging with an activity likely to cause perspiration, I’d like to make a case for keeping handy a bottle, a cool-er, a thermos, an ice chest, a Thermos, an insulated bag or whatever containing a sufficient quantity of bottled water. If one is to perform the perspiration-causing activity indoors, perhaps displaying a reminder sign nearby with the single salient words “Drink Water” would be in order. That might remind us to frequently utilize nearby sources of drinking water.

Keeping our bodies hydrated is important for just about everything we do - thinking, digesting, cardio vascular activity, movement and joints, and so on. If we are unbalancing our bodies with lack of water, we are making whatever activity with which we are engaging that much more difficult. For our bodies’ sake, drink up!

One other important consideration is what we drink. While soda, soft drinks, pop, coffee, energy drinks, tea, alcohol-including drinks, all contain water, they also contain other chemistries, chemistries which affect our bodies. Pure water is hard to beat for optimum performance in most situations. For one thing, the other drinkable options have additional chemistries, chemistries -which affect our bodies. Pure water is hard to beat for optimum performance in most situations. For one thing, the other drinkable options have additional chemistries, ones which alter how we process the drink. They add work to process. Water is simpler. When thirst calls, water answers.

Before thirst arrives, please drink up and replenish your body. Keep your body at optimum operational levels. Drink and be cool.

Safety is more than wearing eyeglasses, and gloves. It’s also about staying healthy as we participate in our hobby. Your safety matters, always!
Rockhound of the Year
by Judi Allison, RoY Chair

Each region has a Rockhound of the Year chairperson so you can submit your nomination to them. Keep in mind that we're trying to make things much simpler by having the ability to email your nominations. We are also striving to have the certificate available shortly after the nominations so that you can decide when you want to make the presentation to your honoree. You will be able to receive your certificate via email to print yourself or we can send it. At any rate nominating a special person in your club to give the honor of Rockhound of the Year is a simple painless process so please remember to submit a short excerpt about your special person.

Rocky Mountain Federation:
The Flatirons Mineral Club (Boulder, CO) members have elected Mr. Craig Hazelton as the 2019 recipient of the Rockhound of the Year award, for his outstanding work with the club members and especially the club’s Junior Geologists group. Craig is a metallurgical engineer with an aerospace company located in Longmont, CO and his vocation with metals has assisted him with the minerals which he displays and teaches the youngsters about. Submitted by: Gerry Naugle, FMC Membership Chair

California Federation:
The Conejo Gem and Mineral Club (CG&MC) is honored to recognize Lawrence Killough as our 2019 Rockhound of the Year. Lawrence is Editor of our club bulletin Rocky Review and serves as a valued member of our Board. He attends and helps set up all of our meetings. If the club needs help with something, he is always there right away. Somehow he is everywhere at once when it comes to helping set up our annual Gem Show and being the guiding hand in running our Silent Auction during the whole show (plus storing and sorting all the rocks at his home). And he is not even retired yet like many of us are! Can he be cloned? Thank you Lawrence, it is club members like you who make our club successful. Submitted by: Chuck Borchart & Mike Havstad, Pres. & Fed. Dir.

California Federation:
John McCabe is a fine, hardworking, intelligent man. He has been Education Director, and Past President of the Santa Lucia Rockhounds. After his retirement he became involved with helping youth and others. In this capacity he has been on the Board in one position or another for twenty years. He tutors geology at Cuesta College and leads numerous geology related walks for both the Santa Lucia Rockhounds and the Morro Bay Natural History Museum. For the past years he has also made countless presentations on geology, and lapidary arts to schools, libraries, and local organizations such as the Lions Club and Kiwanis. We can always count on him to share his knowledge about geology and the art of being a Rockhound. He contributes so much to our Club and we are very fortunate to know him and be in his presence. His smile is all we need to keep us listening to his words about what he values, life. By Mary Caparone, President, Santa Lucia Rockhounds

Midwest Federation (omission from 2018)

Mark Medley, Ozark Earth Science, Gem, Mineral and Fossil Club, Mountain Home, Arkansas

2018 Rockhound of the Year award goes to Mark Medley. Mark has been active in the club for some time now and he has always been eager and willing to help whenever called upon. Even with his busy schedule with his large family and managing his own business, he has also agreed to become our club’s new Treasurer. His dedication and commitment with our club is outstanding! (As printed in the Ozark Earth Science Club News)
Thanks to substantial new pledges from several conservation and animal welfare organizations, the reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the deaths of 42 wild burros from the Clark Mountain Herd Area in California has now risen to almost $60,000.

This week, the Platero Project committed $32,500 towards the reward, along with The Humane Society of the United States ($2,500), Lifesavers Wild Horse Rescue ($2,500) and Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue ($2,500). The new pledges join those of the Bureau of Land Management ($10,000), the American Wild Horse Campaign ($2,500), Return To Freedom ($5,000) and The Cloud Foundation ($1,000). Combined with the new pledges, the total reward is now $58,000.

Since May, a total of 42 wild burro carcasses with gunshot wounds have been found along the interstate 15 corridor between Halloran Springs, California, and Primm, Nevada, in various states of decomposition. They are all from the Clark Mountain Herd Area in San Bernardino County, managed by the BLM’s Needles Field Office. Bureau of Land Management law enforcement is leading the rapidly expanding investigation into the illegal killings, in coordination with the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department, California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

“I appreciate these organizations joining us in our pursuit to identify the perpetrators who are responsible for these appalling and senseless acts,” said Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt. “We are working with law enforcement and are determined to find those who are responsible, bringing them to justice.”

"Lifesavers Wild Horse Rescue has been saving mustangs and burros since 1997,” said Jill Starr. “Lifesavers’ mission compels us to contribute to the reward. We hope it will increase the investigation’s momentum and lead to justice for these heinous and indefensible crimes against animals, and we are particularly grateful to the Platero Project for contributing significantly to the reward fund.”

"The senseless slaying of these wild burros is deeply disturbing, and anyone who is capable of this level of violence must be held accountable," said CEO and president of the Humane Society of the United States Kitty Block. “Together with the BLM and other organizations we are calling for swift justice for these heinous and indefensible crimes against animals, and we are particularly grateful to the Platero Project for contributing significantly to the reward fund.”

"The murders of the Mojave Desert Burros must be punished to the fullest extent of the law. Burros have been forgotten and underrepresented in the equine rights conversations. Burros must be given a prominent voice and enhanced status and protection on the range," said Platero Project in a statement.

With the increasing reward now on the table, we’re confident that someone will come forward with actionable information soon. The cruelty involved in shooting these burros and leaving them to die warrants prosecution to the fullest extent of the law,” said BLM’s Deputy Director for Policy and Programs William Perry Pendley. “We thank the animal welfare groups for adding their voices to those organizations who value these iconic symbols of the West.”

"The investigation into the California burro killings has generated additional interest and support from animal welfare groups and BLM partners. We’re hopeful the publicity will result in good leads for our investigators to follow,” said California Acting State Director Joe Stout. “We are grateful for all the support.”

"The investigation into the California burro killings has generated additional interest and support from animal welfare groups and BLM partners. We’re hopeful the publicity will result in good leads for our investigators to follow."
Somebody knows something and money talks."
"Either all donkeys matter or none of them do," said Executive Director of Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue Mark Meyers.

Anyone with information about this investigation is asked to call the WeTip hotline at 800-78-CRIME (800-782-7463) or visit http://www.wetip.com. Callers may remain anonymous and be eligible for a reward for information leading to the arrest(s) and conviction(s) of any person(s) responsible for the deaths of these protected animals. More information on the rewards offered by the conservation and animal welfare organizations can be found on the organizations' websites.

The animals are federally protected under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971. The Act protects wild, free-roaming horses and burros from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and considers them an integral part of the natural system of public lands managed by the BLM. Anyone arrested and found guilty of willfully violating a regulation issued pursuant to this Act, shall be subject to a fine of not more than $2,000, or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. These penalties can apply to each count charged.

AFMS Land Use Policy
1. Adherence to the AFMS Code of Ethics assures compliance with most statutes and regulations governing collecting on public lands and encourages respect for private property rights and the environment. Clubs are urged to read the AFMS Code of Ethics in at least one meeting every year, to publish the Code frequently in the club newsletter, and to compel compliance on club field trips.

2. Individuals and clubs are urged to write their elected representatives and land use management agency supervisors regarding issues of rule making, legislation and enforcement affecting field collecting of minerals and fossils.

3. Individuals and clubs are urged to join and support activities of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), a sister organization with responsibility for advancing the interests of earth science amateurs with legislatures and land use management agencies.

4. The AFMS will receive a report from ALAA at its annual meeting.

5. The AFMS endorses the principle of multiple use of public lands as a guarantee of continuing recreational opportunities.

6. Wilderness and monument designations are inconsistent with the principle of multiple use. In view of the vast amount of public land already designated as wilderness and monuments, future such designations should be minimal, taking into account the increased demand for recreational opportunities, including rockhounding, created by a growing population.

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Upcoming AFMS and Regional Federation Conventions from Emerson Tucker

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AFMS Committees: 2018 - 19

Here is the listing of Committee Chairs for 2018-19. Please feel free to contact these people if you need information, have questions or would like to share ideas with them.

All American Club
Regina Kapa
1483 E Wood St; Decatur, IL 62521
217-233-1164 <cignie at comcast.net>

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year
Judith Allison
2701 NW 11th St; Hermiston, OR 97838
541-720-4950 <fmssec at gmail.com>

AFMS Newsletter
Suzanne Webb
9895 Kerrydale Ct., Reno, NV 89521-4401
775-624-8446 <AFMSeditor at gmail.com>

Boundaries
Bob Carlson
1585 Los Pueblos, Los Alamos, NM 87544
505-662-5334 <illegitimusnoncarborundum at inbox.com>

Bulletin Editor’s Hall of Fame
Carolyn Weinberger
P.O. Box 302, Glyndon, MD 21071
<stevew@tcbmail.com>

Bulletin Editors Advisory
Mark Nelson
1475 Paseo Maravilla, San Dimas, CA 91773
909-996-1784 <nnelsonnair at aol.com>

Bylaws Revisory
Steve Weinberger
P.O. Box 302, Glyndon, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926 <editor at amfed.org>

Central Office Administrator
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Commemorative Stamps
Wendell Mohr
333 Russell Ave. Apt 115 Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 926-7190 <wmohr at erols.com>

Conservation and Legislation
John Martin
1309 West Ave L4; Lancaster, CA 93534
661-942-8336 <martin at antelecom.net>

Convention Advisory
Emerson Tucker
4039 16th St; Lubbock, TX 79416
806-281-6639 <emertuck at gmail.com>

Endowment Fund
Cheryl Neary
42 Jefferson Ave; Patchogue, NY 11772
516-449-5341 <ciervo.neary at gmail.com>

Financial Investment
Wayne Cox
8152 Spanker Ridge Rd Bentonville, AR 72712
479-254-0894 <waynecox3 at earthlink.net>

Historian
Jennifer Haley
407 Tico Rd; Ojai, CA 93023
707-252-7565 <adubug at napablogger.com>

Inter-Regional Field Trip
Doug True
2622 Broadwater; Billings, MT 59102
406-670-0506 <truefossils12 at yahoo.com>

Judges Training Seminar
Marion Roberts
1505 Plumas Ave; Modesto, CA 95358
209-538-0197 <mvroberts1 at comcast.net>

Junior Programs
Jim Brace-Thompson
7319 Eisenhower St., Ventura, CA 93003-2511
(805) 659-3577 <jbraceth at roadrunner.com>

Long Range Planning
Sandy Fuller
8445 Grange Blvd; Cottage Grove, OR 97424
<spwtf at rock-biz.biz>

Name Badges
Frank Mullaney
5705 Begonia Drive, San Jose, CA 95124-6535
(408) 266-1791 <rockyv at aol.com>

Nominating
Sandy Fuller (see Long Range Planning)

Parliamentarian
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Past President’s Advisory
Sandy Fuller (see Long Range Planning)

Photography
John Martin (see Conservation)

Program Competition
Darrell Watkins
PO Box 635; Tieton, WA 98947
509-673-0085 <AFMSprograms at gmail.com>

Publications
B. Jay Bowman
191 Bowman Rd; Ponca City, OK 74604
580-761-5066 <bjb at wildblue.net>

Public Relations
Bob Jones
PO Box 25846, Scottsdale, AZ 85255
<jonesb52 at gmail.com>

Safety
Ellery Borow
PO Box 47, Waterville, ME 04903-0047
207-547-3154

Show Consultant
Emerson Tucker
4039 16th St; Lubbock, TX 79416
806-281-6639 <emertuck at gmail.com>

Uniform Rules
Marion Roberts (see Judges Training)
<mvroberts1 at comcast.net>

URC Eligibility Files
Josie Middleton
2910 Winchester Dr., Round Rock, TX 78665
<jemzrocz at gmail.com>

Ways and Means
Richard Jaeger
3515 E. 88th. St. Tulsa, OK 74137-2602
918-481-0249 <rjgrsci at aol.com>

Website/Webmaster
Marty Hart
4935 Olivia Dr, Antioch, TN 37013-3570
(615) 331-2690 <webmaster at amfed.org>

Web Site Contest
Don Shurtz
4004 Dublin Rd; Allen, TX 75002
469-688-2821 <don.shurtz at gmail.com>

AFMS Scholarship Foundation
Lauren Williams, President
957 E Elva St; Idaho Falls, ID 83401
<slhariur at msn.com>

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AFMS Land Use Policy

7. In furtherance of the principle of multiple use, the AFMS believes that laws, regulations and rules established by relevant governmental authorities should be designed to allow freest possible access to all public lands, coupled with minimal restrictions on the recreational collection of minerals, fossils, gemstone materials and other naturally occurring materials.

8. A right to collect minerals and fossils on public lands should be protected by statute.

9. The AFMS urges its members to work with any or all government authorities to achieve a good working relationship in order to improve the public image of recreational collectors.

AFMS Code of Ethics

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner’s permission.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavation holes, which may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

I will observe the “Golden Rule,” will use “Good Outdoor Manners” and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere.

To promote popular interest and education in the various Earth Sciences, and in particular the subjects of Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Lapidary and other related subjects, and to sponsor and provide means of coordinating the work and efforts of all persons and groups interested therein; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and by and through such means to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

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Suzanne Webb
9895 Kerrydale Ct.
Reno, NV 89521-4401
<AFMSeditor at gmail.com>
775-624-8446

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9895 Kerrydale Court, Reno, NV 89521
<AFMSeditor at gmail.com>
775-624-8446

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