

Free Rock, Mineral & Semiprecious Gemstone Collection Limits

Rocks, minerals and semiprecious gemstones may be collected on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management without charge or permit as long as:

1. The specimens are for personal use and are not collected for sale, barter or any commercial purpose(s).
2. You may collect reasonable amounts of specimens. In Arizona, BLM sets the “reasonable” limits for personal use as up to 25 pounds per day, with a total limit of 250 pounds per year. These limits are for mineral specimens, common invertebrate fossils, semiprecious gemstones, rock, and petrified wood.
3. A group of people do not pool their yearly allotment to collect a piece larger than 250 pounds of either rockhounding specimens or petrified wood.
4. Collection does not occur in developed recreation sites or areas, unless designated as a rockhounding area by BLM.
5. Collection is not otherwise prohibited or restricted and posted.
6. Collection, excavation or removal are not aided with motorized or mechanical devices, including heavy equipment or explosives. Metal detectors are acceptable, with the exception of the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area.
7. No undue or unnecessary degradation of the public lands occurs during the removal of rock, minerals, or gemstones.
8. For pieces of petrified wood heavier than 250 pounds or situations not covered in this pamphlet, please contact your local BLM office.
9. If you wish to obtain more than 250 pounds of rock in a year, please visit the appropriate BLM office and inquire about arranging a permit.



Bureau of Land Management:

Arizona State Office
One N. Central Ave, Ste 800
Phoenix, AZ 85004-4427
(602) 417-9200

Arizona Strip District
Arizona Strip Field Office
Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, UT 84790-9000
(435) 688-3200

Colorado River District
Lake Havasu Field Office
2610 Sweetwater Avenue
Lake Havasu City, AZ
86406
(928) 505-1200

Kingman Field Office
2755 Mission Boulevard
Kingman, AZ 86401
(928) 718-3700

Yuma Field Office
2555 East Gila Ridge Road
Yuma, AZ 85365-2240
(928) 317-3200

Gila District
Tucson Field Office
3201 East Universal Way
Tucson, AZ 85756
(520) 258-7200

Safford Field Office
711 14th Avenue
Safford, AZ 85546-3321
(928) 348-4400

San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area
4070 S. Avenida Saracino
Hereford, AZ 85615
(520) 439-6400

Phoenix District
Hassayampa Field Office
Lower Sonoran Field Office
21605 North 7th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85027-2099
(623) 580-5500

Arizona Geological Survey

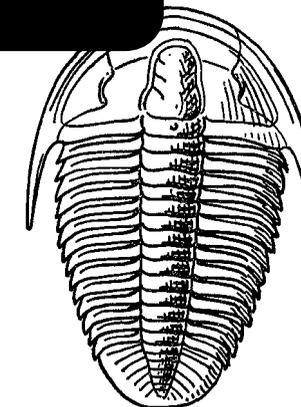
416 W. Congress
Tucson, AZ 85701
520-770-3500
www.azgs.gov

**For More Public Land
Rockhounding Information...**

www.blm.gov/az

BLM/AZ/GI-14/009

ROCK HOUNDING in Arizona



ROCKHOONDING is the collection of reasonable amounts of mineral specimens, rocks, semiprecious gems, petrified wood and invertebrate fossils. Invertebrate fossils are the remains of animals that didn't have bones such as shellfish, corals, trilobites and crinoids. The material collected must not be sold or bartered. Arizona has localities for rockhounding and fossil collecting, not all of which are found on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands.

It is highly recommended that you check land ownership when planning a rockhounding trip. A good place to begin is the local BLM office. If you can point to a location on a topographical map (available at BLM), we can determine if the site is on public lands. Please remember that Arizona State Trust Land is not public land. You must obtain the Arizona State Land Department's Recreational Use Permit to camp hike or travel on State land. Rockhounding and metal detecting are not allowed on Arizona State Trust Land.

In most instances, BLM administered lands are open to rockhounding. BLM can help you make this determination.



Mineral Collecting on Public Lands

Because rocks are made up of varying mixtures of minerals, and because there are about two thousand different minerals, the number of possible combinations is limitless. It is therefore very difficult to classify rocks except in broad, general groups. The most general classification of rocks is by method of formation: Igneous, Sedimentary and Metamorphic.

Mineral specimens are normally examples of a specific mineral or assemblage of minerals collected by people. Mineral specimens can also include rock types. Examples of mineral specimens found in Arizona include: quartz, azurite, malachite, selenite and calcite. A few of these found on BLM public lands in Arizona are:

Specimen:	BLM Field Office:
Quartz Crystals	Hassayampa, Yuma
Selenite	Arizona Strip

Semiprecious gemstones are used in jewelry-making and decorative arts. They are usually rocks that can be faceted or polished and are able to hold a shine. To collect semiprecious gemstones for commercial purposes, or in amounts greater than those indicated in this pamphlet, contact your local BLM office to obtain information. Examples of semiprecious gemstones found in Arizona are agates, fire agates, jasper, onyx and Apache tears. A few of these found on BLM public lands in Arizona are:

Specimen:	BLM Field Office:
Fire Agates	Kingman, Safford
Apache Tears	Kingman, Hassayampa

Petrified wood can be found in Arizona within the jurisdiction of the BLM Hassayampa, Safford, Yuma and Arizona Strip Field Offices.

Collecting Artifacts, Meteorites, & Fossils on Public Lands

Casual Collection:

Meteorites may be casually collected (i.e., free and without a permit), pursuant to BLM's regulations at 43 CFR 8365.1-5. In accordance with those regulations, collection of meteorites is limited to certain public lands. Public lands closed to casual collection include: developed recreation sites, certain units of the National Landscape Conservation System, areas excluded from casual collection in a Land Use Plan such as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or a wilderness area, and areas closed by supplemental regulations. Individuals are limited to collecting what can be easily hand-carried, up to a maximum of ten pounds of meteorites per individual, per year. Only surface collection of meteorites using non-motorized and non-mechanized equipment is allowed (metal detectors may be used); and casually-collected meteorites are for personal use only, and may not be bartered or sold for commercial purposes.

Prohibited Activities Abandoned Mines

Arizona contains thousands of abandoned mine sites left over from operations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Abandoned mines contain many hazards, including cave-ins, falling hazards and bad air. For your safety, do not enter abandoned mines under any circumstances. Theft or destruction of structures or equipment within abandoned mine sites is illegal.

Report any abandoned mine hazards to the Arizona State Mine Inspector at (602) 542-5971.

Check for mining claims before visiting a site. Mining claimants may have the right to exclude others from using their mining claims.

Suction Dredging

You cannot engage in suction dredging at a casual use level on BLM administered lands. You must file either a Notice or Plan of Operations pursuant to 43 CFR 3809.

Collecting of mineral and fossil resources is prohibited in certain areas being managed under special designation to protect their scientific and natural values.

Collecting in BLM national monuments is prohibited.

Indian & Other Historical Artifacts:

You may not collect any artifacts, ancient or historical, on public lands without a permit. This includes arrowheads or flakes, pottery or potsherds, mats, rock art, old bottles or pieces of equipment and buildings. These items are part of our national heritage and scientists are still learning much from them. Human burial remains on both public and private land are protected by federal and state law from being collected.

Vertebrate Fossils:

These include dinosaurs, mammals, sharks and fish, or any animal with a skeletal structure. You cannot collect these fossils without a permit from the BLM. Permits are given to people who meet specific qualifications. A letter from a BLM approved repository is required saying fossils or artifacts collected will be accepted. These items must be placed in the repository and cannot be kept by the collector. BLM does not authorize the commercial use of fossils collected on public lands.