Rockhounding

Is one of many recreational pursuits on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Collecting small, noncommercial quantities of rock is allowed free of charge on lands managed by BLM. Commercial collecting for the purpose of sale or barter is not allowed without special permit. Only hand tools such as shovels and picks may be used.

Rockhounds are welcome to collect limited amounts of rocks, minerals, and gemstones from most federal lands, but there are some exceptions. Some lands are withdrawn or reserved for certain purposes such as outstanding natural areas, research natural areas, recreation sites, national historic sites, etc. Other lands are not open to collecting due to the presence of mining claims. The local BLM offices can provide information about collecting areas and areas that are closed.

Collecting Guidelines

1. Know whose property you are on.
2. Get permission when collecting on private property and mining claims.
3. Don't use blasting materials or mechanized earth moving equipment.
4. Limit excavation depth to four feet and fill in holes before you leave.
5. Collect only what you can reasonably use until your next trip.
6. Leave all gates as you found them.
7. Find out if any fire restrictions are in effect.
8. Make sure your campfire is completely out before leaving area.
9. No vehicles or mechanized equipment are allowed in wilderness areas.

Collecting sites

There are a variety of areas available for collecting within the Needles Field Office Area. Most of these are best located and described on the appropriate BLM Desert Access Guide (DAG) maps.

1. TURTLE MOUNTAIN, Parker DAG
   Jasper, opalite, chalcedony rose and agate.
2. CHEMEHUEVI WASH, Parker DAG Agate, blue opal, jasper, geodes, chalcedony rose and agate.
3. VIDAL JUNCTION, Parker DAG
   Calcedony.
4. FLAT TOP MOUNTAIN, Needles DAG Jasper
5. CHAMBLESS, Amboy DAG
   Hematite, magnetite, limestone with fossils.
6. MARBLE MOUNTAIN FOSSIL BED AND ROCK COLLECTING AREA
   Amboy DAG Imbedded Trilobites in limestone, epidote, dolomite, chrysocolla, chalcedony, serpentine, marble, garnet, hematite, kenatite, quartz crystals, and geodes.
7. SHIP MOUNTAINS, Amboy DAG
   Beautiful opalite in a variety of pastel colors.

PETRIFIED WOOD: Petrified wood is available for collection on a free basis in limited quantities as long as the collection is for personal, non-commercial purposes. According to Federal regulations (43 CFR 3622) free use collection weights are limited to 25 pounds plus one piece per day, not to exceed 250 pounds in one calendar year, and no specimen greater than 250 pounds may be collected without a special permit. The petrified wood must be for your personal use and cannot be sold or bartered. Special permits for commercial collecting can be obtained from the nearest BLM office. Mining claims may not be staked for petrified wood.

HISTORICAL ARTIFACTS AND FOSSILS
The Antiquities Act of 1906, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 prohibit the excavation, collection or destruction of any archaeological materials (including fossils) located on lands under federal jurisdiction. Artifacts, fossils, petroglyphs, human remains, and other materials are protected by law because their interpretation is critical to understanding past cultures.

CALIFORNIA

ROCKHOUNDING

General Information

Needles Field Office
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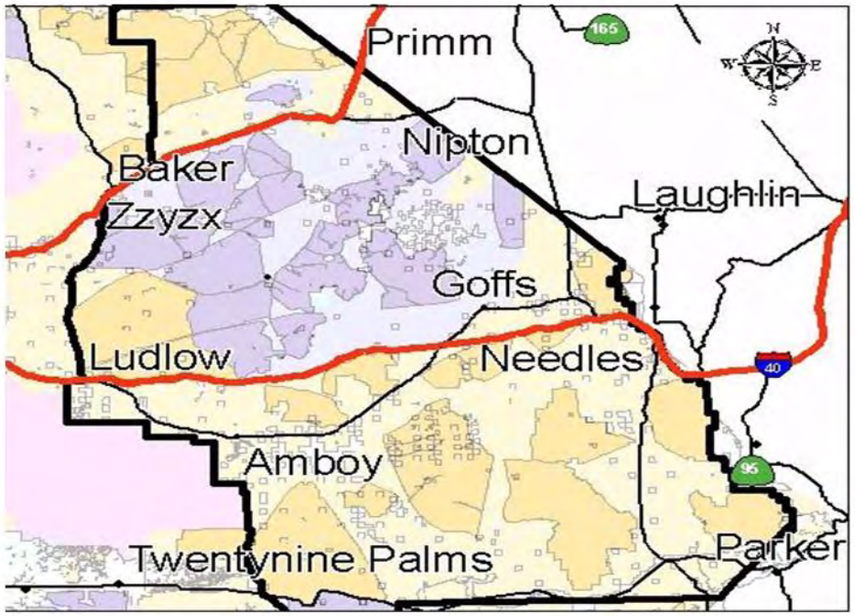
Needles, CA 92363

Phone: (760)326-7000
Fax: (760)326-7099
www.blm.gov/ca/needles

Public Lands USA: Use, Share, Appreciate

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

BLM
Needles Field Office



OHV Use

Off-highway vehicles (OHVs) provide fun, entertainment, and discovery. However, many of the desert's most attractive and fragile resources can be destroyed if vehicle access is not properly controlled. Resources, cultural and natural, can be unintentionally damaged or destroyed by uncontrolled vehicle use. We all have the responsibility for the proper use of vehicles, so please remember to TREAD LIGHTLY on public and private lands. Stay on open routes of travel

NO CROSS COUNTRY TRAVEL

BLM/CA/GI-2009-017+8300

Please Be Advised

Military explosives can be found most anywhere in the desert. Large areas of the desert were and still are used for bombing ranges and maneuvers by the U.S. Armed Forces. There may be unexploded devices that can cause serious bodily injury or death if handled. Report any such devices to the Federal Interagency Communications Center toll free at (888) 233-6518 or call 911.

The Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center borders the western edge of the Needles Field Office Area of responsibility. This is a live bombing range. Do NOT enter the bombing range!

Desert Safety

- Summer temperatures routinely exceed 110° Fahrenheit. Each year people are lost, injured, and sometimes die while visiting desert areas. Take precautions to prevent finding yourself in an emergency situation.

- Always tell someone your plans, or leave a visible note on the dash of your vehicle with your expected route, destination, and time of return. Stick to your itinerary.

- Carry plenty of water. Drink at least a gallon per day.

- Take food or snacks. In the heat, you may not feel hungry, but your body needs nourishment.

- Never go alone.

- Take a good map and compass.

- Carry a first aid kit, signal mirror, flashlight and matches.

- Take a CB radio or cellular phone.

- Wear sunscreen and sunglasses.

- Dress in light colored, loose fitting clothes. Long-sleeves, long pants, a hat, and sturdy shoes will help protect you from the sun, coarse volcanic material, and sharp, spiny vegetation.

- Bring a jacket with you, as evening temperatures may drop 30 degrees or more.

- Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition. Check your tires, spare tire, jack, lug wrench, and fluid levels. Always start with a full tank of gas and try not to let it fall below half a tank before filling up again.

- If you are stranded, stay with your vehicle. Don't panic. Your vehicle is easier to spot than a person walking. Lift your hood. Attempt to signal for help using a mirror or by using newspapers to make an X on the ground.

- Watch for snakes, spiders, and scorpions among the rocks.

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In Case of Emergencies Contact the Federal Interagency Communications Center (FICC) at (888)233-6518 or call 9-1-1.