



American Lands Access Association, Inc.

www.amlands.org

Volume 11 Issue 4

October - December 2019

Shirley Leeson, ALAA President

president@amlands.org

The year 2019 is ending... and it's been a really hectic year for ALAA. We have made strides in getting back our sagging membership but we have a long way to go.

To the Officers, Directors and State Representatives, a sincere 'thank you' for all you have volunteered to do this past year.

Unfortunately in this day and age, volunteering isn't something people are doing. There are positions in the local clubs, at the regional level and even at the national level that have gone un-fulfilled and that's a real shame.

To CORVA (California Off-Road Vehicle Assn) and NMOHVA (New Mexico Off Highway Vehicle Alliance) we say, 'Thank you for your help and supporting us.'" Both these off road groups belong to ALAA, and we belong to their organizations. They have given us so much.

To all the clubs who have supported ALAA this past year, I can't thank you enough and for a few new clubs who have joined ALAA, we hope you are as committed as we all are.

This is directed toward the clubs in ALAA...is the person receiving the ALAA Newsletter the one who is sharing with the club what ALAA is about and what ALAA is trying to do? Or is there someone in the club who we need to see gets the ALAA Newsletter and has the time to forward to the club members, put a copy on the table at club meetings and send it to other clubs close by or to exchange newsletters editors, via the club editor?

Now for 2020...We, ALAA, have some plans and will be unfolding them shortly after the first of the year....stay tuned.

your 2019 recycled President

Shirley Leeson

....now residing in the great state of Texas

"It's Confirmed...." At the ALAA Meeting in Quartzsite on January 18, 2020 at the Quartzsite Community Center 295 East Chandler Street starting at 7:00 PM MST, our guest speaker will be Congressman Paul Gosar of Arizona's District 4 and chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus. We will have the latest information on Public Lands legislation and Recreational Rockhounding in the western states. Please try to attend this important meeting. A Question and Answer opportunity follows the presentation.

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ALAA Meetings Quartzsite 2020

The American Land Access Association (ALAA) will hold several short business-related meetings January 17 -18, 2020, in Quartzite, Arizona, during the period of the famous QIA PowWow Gem and Mineral Show. These meetings will be the kickoff of a busy year for this important organization. The following summary is offered for your planning:

- A Special Meeting of the current Officers and Board of Directors at which the 2020 ALAA budget and several meeting-related changes to the ALAA Bylaws will be discussed and presented for approval. Officers and Directors will be notified after January 1st as to where and what time the meeting will be held Friday, January 17th, 2020. All Officers and Directors will be contacted by email for confirmation of attendance or arrangements to participate by teleconference.
- Two short meetings are scheduled for the 6PM - 7PM period Saturday, January 18th, at the Community Center, 295 East Chandler Street, Quartzite, AZ. The 6:00 PM ALAA Annual General Membership Meeting for 2020 at which the assembled members who are eligible to vote will elect the 2020 Board of Directors. No absentee or proxy votes are allowed.
- The newly elected 2020 ALAA Board of Directors will then meet at the same location at 6:30 PM for its Annual election of the slate of ALAA 2020 Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer/Membership).
- ALAA is also sponsoring an educational and informational/discussion session for the Quartzite community at-large starting at 7 PM in the same Community Center, 295 East Chandler Street, Quartzite. The session will feature a briefing on key recreational land-access issues and challenges. We are currently in the process of getting a special speaker...more to come on this.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles for the NEWSLETTER are DUE to the Editor by the
10th of January - 10th of April - 10th of July - 10th of October

For inclusion in each Quarterly Newsletter

Please send articles to: **editor@amlands.org**

Please send articles in plain text, MS Word (.doc)

Pictures in jpg format at not less than 96 dpi or more than 200 dpi.

Please do not send articles in PDF format.

**Concerns or questions on article format please contact the editor at
editor@amlands.org**

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Provided, Credits and Citations are Maintained.

CALIFORNIA NEWS

Jennifer Haley

California State Director

jennifer.haley@amlands.org

The Washington D.C. Record of Decision for the West Mojave Route Network Project (ROD)- This was released in October 2019. The Proposed LUPA/Final Supplemental EIS, published on April 26, 2019, identified Alternative 5 as the Selected Alternative. They have stated there were no inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies or programs identified during the Governor's Proposed LUPA/Final Supplemental EIS.

The following is the BLM's link to the documents containing the information of Alternative 5.

https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/docset_view.do?projectId=93521¤tPageId=139661&documentId=171245.

Here you'll be able to sort through the Route Tables and Travel Management Plans to check on the routes you have used in the recent past. There are literally hundreds and hundreds of pages of route tables. If your club field trip chairman has a list of the current routes you use, you'll have an easy time fact checking routes before your next field trip. Remember, route numbers from many years ago have not been "active" in the BLM system for quite awhile. Only the route numbers submitted by stakeholders like yourselves were taken under consideration in the planning, so you can understand why ALAA stressed the importance of sending in your current recreational route information during the BLM's planning stages. BLM will now begin the project to update the route signage.

Navigating Recreational Rockhounding Field Trips with Alternative 5 Changes. As long as the routes are still signed as open, you'll be able to travel on them. The BLM's Geographic Information System (GIS) is currently assigning route numbers to the new route system. As soon as this task is completed, BLM will start work on signing the new route system and removing route signs on those routes that were closed by the 2019 ROD. In the meantime, Recreational Rockhounding clubs can contact the BLM Barstow Field Office to check on the status of this work. Additionally, as clubs, you can contact the Barstow field office to start discussions on access needs to popular rockhounding sites. <https://navigator.blm.gov/home>

BLM Raises Award- BLM has announced the reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for illegally shooting and killing 46 wild burros in the Mojave Desert region of San Bernardino County, has now grown to \$100,000.

Montana News

Ken Zahn

ALAA Director- Montana
Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies
President 2019-2010
ken.zahn@amlands.org

Status of Collecting at Crystal Park, Montana

There has been some discussion about the status of Montana's 220-acre Crystal Park Picnic and Mineral Collecting Area, the recreational rock-hounding site for smoky quartz and amethyst sceptor crystals northwest of Dillon, Montana. Administered by Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (BDLNF), the site has been under BDLNF management, after transfer from the Butte Mineral and Gem Club, for many decades. Open to the public by paved road access and with a minimal parking lot fee (\$5) and good collecting success rates, this has become a nation-wide collecting destination. The site is currently withdrawn from mineral location through a date in 2023, by which time an extension of the withdrawal period is expected to be approved by the Department of the Interior (DOI). Although comments have been heard that the site was reclaimed and closed until the digging area can be expanded, these rumors are incorrect, as I learned by checking recently with the staff in Dillon by phone. Several years ago, there were extensive cleanups of deadfall and tree hazards and hole-filling in the southern portions of the northeast-facing ridge south of the parking area and highway (as well as parking lot upgrades and installation of screen tables for cleaning crystals), but this cleanup closure lasted only 3 days and has not been resumed.

Short of temporary closures for mosquito abatement or other needed safety-related activities, the BDLNF does not plan for either long closures or restrictions on continued digging in the 220-acre parcel. A proposed expansion by an additional 390 acres adjacent to the current 220 acres was disapproved by the DOI in 2015, and BDLNF management staff has indicated that it feels there is still ample un-dug land within the current 220 acres to provide great recreational crystal collecting for decades to come. For general site information, see: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/bdnf/recarea/?recid=5669>

Bottom line: Crystal Park continues to be open in summers and early Fall, and neither further expansion nor extended closures are currently anticipated.

Ken Zahn, 2019-2020 NFMS President, Bozeman, MT.

SHOW DATES FOR 2020

Your show dates for 2020 Gem and Mineral Shows Sponsored by Member Clubs and Societies of the **American Lands Access Association**, Inc. can be added to the ALAA Website. See the ALAA Website for more info. <http://www.amlands.org/344034.html>

For inclusion in the list send you show information to showdates@amlands.org

Hidemi Kira - ALAA Vice President

vice_president@amlands.org

Building Relations with BLM

I am sure many of you know ALAA has been doing the Clean-Up with the BLM in the Quartz-site, AZ area for years during the QIA Pow Wow to build a strong and good relation with BLM. The following activity is one of an example of building a good relation with the BLM, which took place recently at Hampton Butte in Central Oregon near Prineville. This location has been a very popular site for collecting green petrified wood and wood replacements.

When the NFMS hosted the AFMS Convention & Show in 2016, Hampton Butte was one of the official field trip sites and had lots of fun with many other members. After two years, the place was like a war zone with big holes and trenches. People were even digging places where normal rockhounds will not dig. We heard that this site was posted on Social Media and attracted many people. If the BLM saw this site, it would have given them a good excuse to close this area for rockhounding. This place was on the BLM's table to be closed to the public, but the member of the Oregon Council of Rocks and Mineral Clubs (OCRMC) has been working very hard to prevent it from closure.

The OCRMC is an 501(c)(4) organization, which the objective is similar to ALAA, but limited to activities in Oregon (more info at ocrmc.org). There are 16 member Clubs from Oregon as of Oct. 26, 2019 and is a member of ALAA.

The OCRMC decided to form a work party to fix this site with the BLM involved. The OCRMC President, Dave Williams contacted the BLM office in Prineville to discuss this matter.

On June 13th 2019, President Dave and three members met with the BLM staff, Geologist, Kevin Weldon and Outdoor Recreation Planner, Michael Anderson at the Prineville Office and headed to the Hampton Butte together to have a meeting at the site.

The BLM staffs were surprised of how bad the situation was, but were happy to know the rockhounds are willing to fix this place. Their suggestion for the work party was to do it on September 28th, which is the National Public Lands Day. They also suggested a Partnership Agreement with their agency. We asked if a small tractor with a front loader could be used, but to obtain the permission will take a very long time, so hand tools only was suggested for this time.

On Sep. 28th, despite the snow and rain weather forecast, we had 11 members from the OCRMC and 3 staffs from the BLM office. We started to fill in the holes and trenches together with the BLM staffs near the parking area and slowly expanded. We started from 9 am and finished around 3 pm. It was not the perfect weather, but had fun working together.

The BLM gave each member a T-Shirt with the design of "National Public Land Day" and a free pass for entering the National Public Lands. Since this place is a very broad area, OCRMC is planning to make this an annual event and also pursue the Partnership Agreement with the BLM.

Continued on Page 12.....

Fieldtrip Journal for Public Lands

(Blank Forms are on Page 6 & 7)

This is the simple Journal to document your Fieldtrip Activities and record the access routes needed to get to and from collecting sites. This data will be useful when asked to submit comments to Public Land Managers during the Public Comment Period on potential Public Land Access Closures proposals.

Your information could save your collecting sites from route closures and access restrictions.....

**ALAA – DATA BASE OF COLLECTING SITES
BY STATES**

PRIVATE COLLECTING SITES

NAME OF SOCIETY/CLUB: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____
Zip _____

Field Trip Leader:

Name: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____

Collected Material: _____

Name of Company, Ranch or Owner: _____

General Manager: _____

Contact Person: _____

Liability Insurance Requirement: Yes: _____ No: _____

Location (Address): _____

GPS: _____

Distance from your Club: _____

Frequency of leading trips to this location: _____

Number of attendance: _____

Day trip or Overnight: _____

Closest Town: _____

Groceries, gas, restaurants, motels, hardware stores or other impact on the town:

Other Comments for this site:

Date Filled in Form: _____

Please keep copy for your files, send a copy to fieldtrip@amlands.org

**ALAA – DATA BASE OF COLLECTING SITES
BY STATES
GOVERNMENT COLLECTING SITES**

NAME OF SOCIETY/CLUB: _____

Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Field Trip Leader:

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Collected Material: _____

FOREST SERVICE _____ GRASSLANDS _____ BLM _____

Did you contact District Manager? Yes: _____ No: _____ Contact Name: _____

Did you have to register your group? Yes: _____ No: _____

Routes to the exact collecting site: _____

GPS: _____

Closest Town: _____

Groceries, gas, restaurants, motels, hardware stores or other impact on the town: _____

Other Comments for this site: _____

Date Filled in Form: _____

Please keep copy for your files, send a copy to fieldtrip@amlands.org

David Nock

Eastern Director

David.Nock@amlands.org

New EFMLS Field Program, **EFTA** & an Archaeological Site saved!
Branford, Connecticut

Reprint from the EFMLS News, September 2019

The Eastern Fields

A New Column About All Things In Eastern's
Field Programs



Eastern Field Access Council



The Eastern Federation of Mineralogical & Lapidary Societies is continuing to explore different ways we can assist our family of Affiliate Societies and our field trip needs.

The **reality** is clear. Most Mineral Societies need help in almost every aspect of their field collecting opportunities. The primary concern of course is access. We are developing a multi-tiered approach to try to help with the many issues surrounding field collecting. This includes multiple programs.

Eastern Field Access Council (EFTA)
Eastern Field Trip Alliance
American Lands Access Association
Joint Federation Field Trips

not a matter of how, but when...

When we work together, we can expand our opportunities to increase access to places for field collection. When sites close or are no longer available to us, our hobby loses and we do as well, as individuals. When are we going to join forces and put forth a concerted effort to stop the decline? And, what if we were to be proactive in common, to find new or previously "closed" sites?

The Federation will be forming a Council to understand the challenges of limited access as well other issues related to your local field programs. This may be a monumental task but when we think of the rewards, is it worth it? (HECK YES!)

For more information on Eastern's Field Trip Programs, please email: [efmlsinc at gmail dot com](mailto:efmlsinc@gmail.com)



Groton, CT

If first met Astro-Archaeologist, Vance Tiede many years ago and he told me about this site in CT called **Gungywamp**. Consisting of artifacts dating from 2000-770 BC, a stone circle, and the remains of both Native American and colonial structures. Among multiple structural remains, of note is a stone chamber featuring an astronomical alignment during the equinoxes. Besides containing hive-like chambers and petroglyphs, the Gungywamp site has two circles of stones near its center, just north of two stone chambers. Two concentric circles of large quarried stones - 21 large slabs are laid end to end at the center of the site. **For many years the property ownership was in limbo until a judge in New London Superior Court ruled last March that the property should transfer into the state's hands.** (for more info, just enter *Gungywamp* in your web browser)



It Was Years Ago...

Shirley Leeson

President@amlands.org

ALAA had been floundering and needed help. I reached out to Amy Granat of California Off-Road Vehicle Association for help. She took the time to show a novice the ropes on how to work with the BLM on Public Lands. She introduced me to Joanne Spivack of the New Mexico Off Highway Vehicle Alliance and Joanne taught me about NEPA. For those of you who are unfamiliar with NEPA, here is the government's definition:

NEPA requires Federal Agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. To implement **NEPA's** policies, Congress prescribed a procedure, commonly referred to as "the **NEPA** process" or "the **environmental impact assessment process.**"

This procedure must be in place each time the BLM creates a Management Plan for a specific area. It's the same for Forestry. This is an area of expertise by the enviros and their lawyers.

Both CORVA and NMOHVA have been there for us each time we reached out for help on issues like this . If there are off road organizations in your area, reach out to them, they are caring, patient and extremely supportive.

MEMBERSHIP

Ronna Watkins

membership@amlands.org

Greetings from Washington State!

We have had a busy year keeping access open and the new year 2020 will be no different.

We thank you for your membership and your support!

It is once again time to renew your membership to help keep access open and rockhounding alive! We can't do it without your help. Our numbers do count!

It has, also, come to my attention that many people do not know about ALAA and what we do. Please, tell your friends and other clubs about us. I am sure they will want to join the fight to keep access open.

And, as a member, we need you to let us know about land access issues in your area. It is impossible for us to know of every agency in every state and what is happening at every rockhounding site. Please help information to flow up!

Please Renew today!

Thank you...

News from Utah

Jack Johnston

jack.johnston@amlands.org

What is happening in UTAH

The victory in the November election by Willie Gray Eyes gave Democrats two of the three commissioner seats. He is a member of the Navajo Nation, which overlaps with the county." " It was the first general election since a federal judge decided racially gerrymandered districts illegally minimized the voices of Navajo voters who make a slim majority of the county's population." Which is another case of Judges making law.

This changed the vote in San Juan County and Emery County went along because they think they will make more money from Land Rover tourist (per Adrianna Chimeras , Emery Co Recreation Manager) than they will from farmers, ranchers, four-wheelers and rock hounds. The problem here is that they neglect Utahans. Ranchers, miners, young, old, handicapped, four-wheelers, rock hounds, and disabled because only the healthy, privileged and horsemen can travel on the roads that have been there for over a hundred years. Chimeras has also promised to furnish a map showing all open roads and I have promised a map and list of all collecting sites.

1. I asked about Paria Road after receiving this answer from Larry Crutchfield of the BLM office in Kanab.

Many people think it was the Monument that closed the route when it actually happened more than ten years before the Monument was designated...it was closed when the WSA's were created, and WSA's can only be designated as wilderness, or released from WSA status by Congress.

But the truth is.

Some Wilderness activists say BLM never formally allowed vehicles in Paria Canyon. Tell that to Lowell J. Mecham. Mecham's family helped settle the area near the National Monument. This photo was taken in 1999, years after President Clinton designated the Grand Staircase Escalante National Park <http://archive.sharetrails.org/node/9109>

<http://www.stgeorgeutah.com/news/archive/2017/03/08/jla-offroaders-rockhounds-form-alliance-to-fight-closures/#.WvCR9UxFyUk>

I think this paragraph tells the story: Contrary to media reports, relationships between Kane County and the local managers in the BLM and National Monument are surprisingly cordial. Until a final resolution <http://www.stgeorgeutah.com/news/archive/2017/03/08/jla-offroaders-rockhounds-form-alliance-to-fight-closures/#.WvCR9UxFyUk> to the R.S. 2477 issue, the BLM wasn't enforcing closures on roads claimed as 2477 rights, including the Paria. So, what are the activists to do?

The answer is simple for ORV's and Rock Hounding Find a true Utah politician and threaten budget cuts if they do not follow the law and pass a law that revokes all WSA's.

These are my questions

1 What has happened to the RS2477 effort in Utah?

2 What can be done about re-opening Canaan Mountain?

3 What can be done about re-opening Salt Creek Road?

4 What can be done about re-opening Paria Road?

5 How can we be assured that the policies requested by four-wheelers and rock hounds are implemented? By the way, these are policies that President Trump has backed by changing a bunch of Obama's Presidential Orders.

6 How can we be assured that all roads, two-track & Singletrack are listed?

I am making a list of all collecting sites in Utah that are readily available on the internet and books.

That's it, Jack



AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION

NEW MEMBERSHIP and ANNUAL RENEWAL FORM

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Must be postmarked by December 31st of each year

Member / Contact Name: _____
Last First

Member / Contact Name: _____
Last First

Organization Name: _____

Address: _____
Street City State Zip Code

Mailing Address: _____
(if different from above) City State Zip Code

Phone Number: _____
Primary Secondary

Email Address: _____

Alternate Email address: _____

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dues are: **New Member:** **Donation:**
 \$25 for an individual or couple **Renewal:** **Amount Enclosed:** \$ _____
 \$50 for a Club or Society

Leave a note for us:

Please check an option to subscribe to our Email or Snail Mail list.

Please make checks payable to: American Lands Access Association (ALAA)

Please mail this completed form along with your check to the following address:

American Lands Access Association
C/O Membership Chairman
P.O. Box 54398
San Jose, CA 95154

For more information or questions, please email: membership@amlands.org

ALAA is a grassroots 501(c)(4) Educational, non-profit organization. Our organization is present wherever there are hobbyists and recreational users of public lands whose interests and concerns are not being heard or are being jeopardized by proposed policy, regulation or legislation at the local, state and federal level.

ALAA Membership Renewal Form Rev. 2016

**Click on the above Membership Form to use the interactive Form
 (Fillable when opened in Adobe Acrobat Reader)**

ALAA Editor
2010 West Ave. K #528
Lancaster, CA 93536-5229



.....*Continued from page 5*

Later we heard that the BLM Prineville Office has reported this activity to other BLM Offices and heard it was highly appreciated. We didn't get as much members as we wished this time, but small number of people can make a huge difference.

If there is a rockhounding site that needs repair or needs clean-up, I strongly suggest you contact the BLM or government agencies and work together.

If the each clubs could take time to do projects like this perhaps once a year, it will make a huge difference and I am sure the chance of closure of the public land for rockhounding will be significantly reduced.

THE BLM IS ON THE MOVE

The **B**ureau of **L**and **M**anagement is moving its Washington, DC office to Grand Junction, Colorado. The exact time frame of the move is not known at this time. Check on the BLM Website for more information. This will make contacting the main BLM Office easier for the Recreational Rockhound.

Another BLM Move is the California Desert District office is moving from its Moreno Valley, CA location to a new office in Palm Springs, CA.