



American Lands Access Association, Inc.

www.amlands.org

Volume 11 Issue 2

April - June 2019

Shirley Leeson, ALAA President

president@amlands.org

What a difference a few months can make.... In the 1st quarter ALAA Newsletter, 2019 I told you ALAA was basically 'on the ropes.' Since that time we have had a recommitment by all the officers and directors, and we are moving ahead.

I attended the very successful Midwest/AFMS show in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in March 2019. I proposed that we create a new strategy for dealing with the ever increasing management plans of the federal government's public lands. In attending meeting over the years in a number of different states, the officials always suggest that the area isn't being used.... that they can provide better use - like making wilderness out of it, or closing roads, to keep the area pristine for 'the children.'

ALAA is asking all of you to provide us with data on your field trips. It works this way, as an ALAA club/society, and you must be an ALAA club, your field trips will be noted on a new form which the club will keep and send a copy to ALAA for a new data bank we will create. ALAA WILL NOT SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH OTHER CLUBS. The information will be stored, and when the government has a new management plan, or a plan for closing roads on sites recreational rockhounds have been using....we will contact those clubs who have been there, ask permission to use their data as proof that the area has been in use. The other form is for those clubs/societies mostly in the eastern part of the US who collect on private property. Fill out the form, keep a copy for your files and send a copy to ALAA. If in the future, you have trouble with the folks who own the private property and you need a third party who has a copy, dated and filed, it might help the situation. There is a third form that is directly for the Southern California's desert area. This form has the BLM road markers included.

The first two forms were shown at the ALAA Information Meeting., I was able to give those attending both copies of those forms, as well as membership applications. After the ALAA open forum meeting, I was asked to speak to the Midwest Delegates meeting regarding this new plan. It was greeted with enthusiasm.

Through all this we have had a number of clubs/societies who have been sitting on the sidelines and not renewing. I can tell you there has been a resurgence of interest and our membership chair is busy taking renewals and new memberships. It is important to note, in order for this partnership of the club and ALAA and the data base for field trips to work, the clubs must be an ALAA club/society.... Our webmaster, John Martin has put the forms up on the website. Go to: American Lands Access Assn. on the main page on the left hand side is 'field trips' you can download both the two forms and the special form for those who collect in the Southern California Desert area. This form needs marker numbers. This is very important to the BLM who covers this area. Marker numbers shows those roads are open to collecting. **Continued on Page 2**

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Now, on to another topic... ALAA reorganized at the meeting in Quartzsite, January 2019. After that, as your new 'recycled president' I contacted all the officers and directors, asking if they were going to stay on. I mentioned in the 1st Quarter Newsletter that Doc Bob Carlson of Los Alamos, New Mexico was stepping down and then John Wright of Ocean Springs, Mississippi also said he was stepping down because of health reasons. We accepted both retirements with regret. The good news is we have added Jennifer Haley of Ojai, California and Ken Zahn of Bozeman, Montana as ALAA directors and each will be a huge asset to ALAA

The State Reps have been asked to stay on....Most agreed to stay on but we have some states who need leadership. Is someone in your club willing to step forward and take this position? It requires keeping up with what's going on in your state regarding collecting sites, who manages the sites and working with them, and sharing that information with the other clubs in your state....Please step up....we need you.

Until next time....please help ALAA spread the word that we need you....make our membership swell. We are stronger when everyone is involved.

Hidemi Kira - ALAA Vice President

vice_president@amlands.org

First of all, I am very glad that Jennifer Haley from California and Ken Zahn from Montana have taken the position of the ALAA directors. I am sure you have read Jennifer's article in the previous ALAA newsletter. I have known Jennifer from when I was serving as an officer for the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies (NFMS) few years ago and always admired her talent and knowledge in many areas including the public land issues. And I have known Ken Zhan very well for these years as well. He is the current First Vice President of the NFMS and he has a massive knowledge in the public land issues and in many other areas. Both will be a great addition to the ALAA.

As you see in President Shirley's article, ALAA will be asking all of the clubs which belongs to the ALAA to provide us with data on your field trips and create a data base. The data we collect shall be a great tool to keep the collecting sites open when there is a possibility of a closure.

This data base will be only for the clubs which belong to the ALAA, so I strongly encourage you to talk to your fellow rockhounds in other clubs which is not an ALAA member yet or bring it up to your Regional Federation or write in the newsletter and spread out the word. The more areas we have in the data base means the more areas will be covered. I am sure field trips are a very important part of your club activities and truly hope we can keep the current collecting sites open for the recreational rockhounds.

American Lands Access Association

California Director

Jennifer Haley

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The Time is Right to Enliven Recreational Rockhounding

This year the BLM and the Department of the Interior are on a huge enthusiastic campaign to encourage the public to enjoy their public lands, Recreationally, more than ever. I receive one if not more announcements every week from both agencies which include photographs in support of their efforts regarding this. Why?

After reading the Revenues to Federal Government Programs report, it is very clear Recreational use fees amounts for over half of all the combined revenues collected from Forest Products Permits; Forest Service Maps; Grazing Fees and Recreation Fees. None of the other uses mentioned above comes close to Recreational use revenues, and that is what BLM and the Department of the Interior realize. What used to be common uses, isn't anymore for a variety of reasons. Recreation Fees and Recreation Special Use Permits amounts to \$530,851 of the \$945,471 received last year. Second to Recreation is Grazing at \$265,275. Times have changed and the Public Lands agencies have woken up to this fact by looking at the numbers in dollar signs.

We have a great opportunity here as Recreational Rockhounding Clubs/Societies to enliven our hobby. The timing is right, so get out there and do what you do best while enjoying your public lands. Reintroduce yourselves to BLM and other park agencies where collecting is allowed. You might even think about talking to a local ranger station or park office about bringing your junior members out for a program to help earn a badge from the AFMS Future Rockhounds of America Badge Program, or offering a field trip or a short earth science program for the day.

If we don't get involved ourselves and create our own excitement, there isn't anyone who is going to do it for us. We have to create our own public awareness for our hobby, to get the name, Recreational Rockhounding, in the same sentence as other the other common recreational activities; camping; hunting; boating; fishing; hiking. BLM and the Department of the Interior do have an area on their websites recognizing Rockhounding, but it's not usually mentioned in the same sentence as the other recognized activities. I think it is because we are less known as the historical American hobby that we are.

Our favorite Rockhounds who came before us, carried the hobby for many years on our behalf. They were wise enough to see changing times coming for our hobby, and created the American Lands Access Association to help keep public lands open to us. We've lost and won some battles along the way. Fieldtrips and various programs have been the highlight of our hobby for close to 83 years when the Recreational Rockhounding community formally began organizing their Clubs and Societies. Please do your part. Finding a way is actually easy.

I want to emphasize as I did in our most recent ALAA newsletter, that every Federation needs the involvement and support of each other when it comes to our collecting sites. The potential closure of roads to any collecting site, actually threatens the closure of that site to every society and individual, who is a member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, and the public who will become our future club members. We have a future to fulfill for our hobby. Let's stay involved as societies and people working together to accomplish that goal and enjoy the hobby with others as we go about it.

Public education is also about doing great public relations for our hobby.

We're looking for a few good folks....

We need ALAA State Representatives for the following states:

Arizona

Idaho

Iowa

Illinois

Michigan

Minnesota

Mississippi

New Mexico

North Carolina

Washington state - Central

Washington state - East & Northern Idaho

..It's your job, if you wish to take it - to be the team leader for your state, keep in contact with the clubs in your state, or part of your state. To keep up with what is happening on recreational public lands that effects rockhounding. Encourage other clubs in your state to join ALAA... **there is strength in numbers.**

please contact: Shirley Leeson, president@amlands.org

CUSTER GALLATIN NATION FOREST REVISED FOREST PLAN

West Yellowstone, Montana April 4th 2019

Lauren Williams

lauren.williams@amlands.org

The Custer Gallatin forest service plan was an hour and a half long. There were about 15 people in attendance. This is the last call for public comments, June 6th, 2019 is the final date that the public can comment on this Revised Forest Plan.

If you want to comment on the plan give real reasons why you are commenting; because, I feel, it's always been that way, are not real reasons. Furnish them with dates, location, time of year, etc. when you give your reasons why you are for or against their proposal. The final issue of the Custer Gallatin Forest Plan will be issued next year, 2020.

Other years we have broke into groups of four or six and went from area to area to discuss the area that that group leader was in charge of. This year we broke into two groups, because of the small number of individuals, and discussed which area that they (forest service people) had picked out. I was in the wildlife group. They talked about Goats and Sheep. It was hard to decide if they were talking about wild or domestic animals. Someone asked which they were talking about. Apparently the wild Goats and Sheep are like Buffalos and cows, they can give each other diseases. They really do not want you to use domestic sheep as pack animals (first time that I knew that some people were using domestic sheep as pack animals).

At the end, there was discussions about what was discussed in each group. Then some smart-aleck (me) asked what percentage of the Final Plan that, they (the Forest Service) submit to Washington will come back from Washington the way they submitted it. A couple of jaws dropped when I said that. A lot of individuals think that the Forest Service and BLM as only being right there in front of them and never consider that there are other players in the bigger picture. Which is why you write and call you congress people and other Washington D.C. Bureaucrats. After ho-humming around they finally answered the question as yes Washington has the power to change things.

News from Utah

Jack Johnston

jack.johnston@amlands.org

THE PLOT THICKENS IN UTAH

A recent article on KSL.com <https://www.ksl.com/article/46533291/san-juan-county-formally-switches-sides-in-bears-ears-debate> helps us understand why the recent flip flop on S-47 by San Juan County. For those that do not know S-47 was an omnibus bill that was submitted to Congress by Oran Hatch (R-Utah Who retired and was replaced by Mit Romney) and John Curtis R-3 Utah. In its original form, it was barely acceptable if at all by Utahs rock hounds and four-wheelers because it held some protections for continued rock hounding, kept most roads open and limited future closures. But the bill that was approved by Congress and President Trump (Senator Mike Lee R-Utah is the only Utah politician that voted against it) took away the protections to rock hounds, added about 123,000 acres to Wilderness, called non-wilderness WSA's Wilderness (that shuts them off to mechanical access and mineral extraction) and closed about 73 miles of extensively used roads. This switch took place at the request of anti-access groups like SUWA and the change in the San Juan County Commission. This change was brought on by "The victory in the November election by Willie Grayeyes 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?

Well now you know about it what are you going to do about it?

I urge all clubs to join ALAA, become actively involved in the politics of your state, it is the old adage use it or lose it, become involved.

What I am doing

I am personally trying to find out how much it would cost to bring suit against SUWA, and BLM by contacting BRC and others. I am maintaining UAR FOUR WHEEL AND ROCK HOUND (U4WDA, ALAA, RMFM on Facebook and I am maintaining constant contact with my Utah politicians.

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.

MEMBERSHIP

Ronna Watkins
membership@amlands.org

In March, Shirley Leeson spoke at both the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies' and the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies' annual meetings in Cedar Rapids, IA about the importance of Recreational Rockhounds to work together to keep access open. On Friday, March 22nd in-between, she held an informational ALAA meeting and several memberships were received. I want to thank everyone that participated and for your memberships.



Thoughts as a I join ALAA

David Nock
2018-2019 EFMLS President
ALAA Director
david.nock@amlands.org

I was interested in learning about AmLands during the 2018 AFMS/EFMLS Convention. My take away at that time, as I believe many others too on the east coast who attended that meeting, was this organization doesn't really apply to us in the eastern states as the majority of public lands are in the western U.S.

After my EFMLS President's newsletter message about field trips earlier this year, Shirley Leeson emailed me inquiring about collecting sites in my area that aren't privately owned. This got me thinking and realized that there are several sites in CT that are state owned. Shortly afterwards, I remembered another CT site that recently closed that is owned by a municipality. It became clear to me that the issue of public lands access is everywhere in the U.S.

I decided I wanted to help and become a part of AmLands when I met Shirley at the 2019 AFMLS Convention. I like her passion and her drive to make AmLands a formidable force to protect collecting areas for mineral enthusiasts.

How Can I Help ?

Aletha Hoogeterp
Eastern, South Dakota ALAA Rep
aletha.hoogeterp@amlands.org

Hi, my name is Aletha. I have recently agreed to be the Eastern, SD ALAA representative. So now that I said yes, I am left with the question, how can I help? I live on the eastern border of South Dakota, a seven hour drive to Rapid City, where, if we are lucky, the closest land use meetings are held. My husband works full time, and I have a daily part time job. We can't afford to take 3 days off of work every time there is a meeting. That's assuming we even know about it! We usually find out about meetings the day of or after they take place. I think the government agencies are required to post notices in the local papers, but I'm not sure if the larger eastern South Dakota papers qualify as local. And even if they do, I don't have time to search through a newspaper every day looking for notices. So, I turned to the internet. I found that the USDA Forest Service, the US Department of the Interior, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service all have email notification lists that you can sign up for. You can even select which region and topics you would like to receive notifications about. I would encourage everyone to sign up for notifications for your area and the other western areas that you like to go to on collecting trips. Now that I am signed up, I will at least know about the meetings, assuming I get around to checking my emails more frequently. I still won't be able to attend the meetings, but, I might be able to send a comment letter if I have any knowledge of the area in question.

Which brings up another problem. How can those of us living in the Central or Eastern states help protect our access to Western lands? I'm sure there are some who go out west regularly and are familiar with the areas and issues, however, most of us have only made a few trips out west, or none at all. We are not familiar with the collecting areas or routes, and are not able to make substantive, detailed comments about land access issues in the west. This is where the ALAA's new field trip report forms can come in. These are forms that are, or will be available on ALAA's website. ALAA's goal for their public land field trip report form is to establish a data base of information which contains usage numbers for collecting areas, routes used to access the areas, and economic impact on the local economy by tracking money spent at motels, gas stations, restaurants, etc. This form will not be used to let other people know where your secret or favorite collecting sites are. The data collected will only be used to prove that collecting areas and access roads are being used and should be kept open, and to provide proof of the economic impact to the local economy. The private land field trip report form will be used as a record of your club field trips to private collecting areas. If a conflict should arise between the land owners and your club, ALAA will, as a non-involved third party, have proof of your field trip date and the details you recorded. Please fill out these forms, send them in, and make sure all of your recreational rockhound friends know about these forms and what ALAA is trying to do!

Words of Wisdom

ALAA Past President and 2019 AFMS President Doug True

Being only four Months into my term in office, there isn't much to report. Things seem to be going well at least on the surface. I have had the pleasure of visiting with many collectors from all over the country while in Quartzsite, Arizona this winter. It seems the whole country is having an unusually cold winter, even here in Arizona and I am not even thinking about Montana yet.

In visiting with collectors and clubs around the country the subject that always comes up are Field trips. More field trips. Many collectors join a club to be part of the Field trips. No trips and you loose members. We need to find ways to add or continue these trips for our clubs to survive.

In in the Eastern half of the country most of the collecting areas are Private property and a relationship needs to be developed with the land owner. Look at making contracts, special insurance, things that protect both parties and respect the privilege.

The West is a whole different story! There are thousands of collecting locations and most are on Federal lands. We as a group need to work at keeping these sites open. THEY JUST DON'T STAY OPEN We have to remember that there are many people in this country that do not have the same views as we have and it is their land also. The BLM and Forest service in many cases are not aware of the collecting areas and are not marked or located on their maps. So when they talk about closing an area and they do not see any special use needs Guess what happens! **CLOSED**

It is important that every club and or individual members document the places they go to collect With Maps, road numbers, GPS to mark the spot. And then turn it in to the agency that is responsible for that area.. We need to show them the collecting area. We as hobbyist need to get past the It's my location and I don't want to share it attitude.

First it belongs to everyone and needs to be shared. So get all of the information and have a designated club member, or your Federation to work with the Federal agency responsible for management.

Remember to get things done you need to **WORK WITH ~ NOT AGAINST.**

National Park Service Announces 2019 Fee Free Days

The five entrance fee-free days for 2019 will be:

Monday, January 21 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Saturday, April 20 – First Day of National Park Week/National Junior Ranger Day
Sunday, August 25 – National Park Service Anniversary
Saturday, September 28 – National Public Lands Day
Monday, November 11 – Veterans Day

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/11-19-2018-fee-free-days.htm>

Please read the letter below and write your senator and/or congressman. We must get the attention of Washington, DC. Search out the staff people and direct your letter to them. They are the ones behind the scenes that get the work done and organizations like ours recognized....

Shirley Leeson

Oregon Council of Rock & Mineral Clubs Letter to Rep. Kathleen Cathey Introducing Recreational Rockhounding

March 5, 2019

Ms. Kathleen Cathey
Sac Annex Building
105 Fir Street
La Grande, Oregon 97850

Re: Introductory Letter

Dear Ms. Cathey,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the Oregon Council of Rock and Mineral Clubs and describe our purpose. It is my understanding that you have already met one of our Directors, Susie Koppert, so you probably have a general knowledge of our goals. To expand on what you may already know, the Council represents a large number of clubs from around the state which engage in recreational rockhounding. You may have seen our Capitol Case exhibit in Salem where member clubs display the wide variety of material which can be collected in Oregon. Our Council is a non-profit 501(c)(4) corporation whose mission includes:

- Promoting the study of mineralogy, geology, paleontology and the lapidary arts.
- Stimulating interest in the collection, preservation and display of rock, mineral and fossil specimens at local and regional club sponsored events. We award the Oregon Trophy annually to the best case display of "All Oregon Material".
- Adherence to the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Code of Ethics in order to minimize any disturbance resulting from our activities. I have enclosed a copy of the Code for your review.
- Establishing effective communication with federal land management agencies about the need to access publicly owned lands for recreational rockhounding.
- Advocating with legislators to advise representatives about the interests of rock hounds when making policy decisions.

The pursuit of our avocation necessarily means being able to use state and federally managed lands. Without the ability to collect in these areas, we will be severely limited in the enjoyment of our hobby. The Council interacts with the BLM and Forest Service to advocate for resource policies which allow for access and a variety of uses. We would ask that you keep our interests in mind when proposing any legislation or in your communication with federal agencies regarding land management policies.

I have included an informational tri-fold for your reference. If I can be of any assistance to you or Senator Wyden regarding natural resource issues, please give me a call at 541-677-9341 or drop me an email at Igneous80@q.com. We greatly appreciate your continued interest in recreational rockhounding. Hopefully you may have a chance to enjoy our hobby in the field. Eastern Oregon is one of the best places on earth to find much sought after jasper, thunder eggs and petrified wood. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dave Williams, President
Oregon Council of Rock and Mineral Clubs
1480 NW Vallejo Drive
Roseburg, OR 97471

Rockhound Soapbox

John Martin

AFMS Conservation and Legislation Committee
afmsclc@antelecom.net

S. 47: John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act became Law on March 12, 2019.

Law: Pub.L. 116-9

Natural Resources Management Act Summary

This bill sets forth provisions regarding various programs, projects, activities, and studies for the management and conservation of natural resources on federal lands.

Specifically, the bill addresses, among other matters

- land conveyances, exchanges, acquisitions, withdrawals, and transfers;
- national parks, monuments, memorials, wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, historic and heritage sites, and other conservation and recreation areas;
- wildlife conservation;
- helium extraction;
- small miner waivers of claim maintenance fees;
- wildland fire operations;
- the release of certain federal reversionary land interests;
- boundary adjustments;
- the Denali National Park and Preserve natural gas pipeline;
- fees for medical services in units of the National Park System;
- funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund;
- recreational activities on federal or nonfederal lands;
- a national volcano early warning and monitoring system;
- federal reclamation projects; and
- Search-and recovery-missions.

In addition, the bill reauthorizes the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation Program and the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program.

How the law may affect Recreational Rockhounding

This change in the law has an effect on Public Lands in all 50 states. Some of these legislative Changes will and do have an affect on how and where Recreational Rockhounding activities may be accomplished.

The bill (S-47) and the enacted law are 260 pages and too large to print here or to go into very much detail. However, just in California alone 118,653,020 acres of BLM managed lands have been converted to Wilderness areas including some areas near the Hauser Geode Beds. This land has no motorized access but collecting may be allowed provided it can be collected without wheeled access or any mechanical collecting devices. The National Park Service managing Death Valley Nation Park and Joshua Tree National Park added 92,525 more acres where no Recreational Rockhounding is allowed

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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



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and the USFS added 7,141 acres to existing wilderness areas. This land most of which is removed from Recreational Rockhounding equals over 185,551 Square Miles of Public land. There were some positive affects of the law in California. Six OHV areas were declared in the law and can not be changed by any future legislation and several Wilderness Study Areas, (WSA) were removed and returned to public multi-purpose usage, where Recreational Rockhounding is again temporally permitted. The BLM has 2 years to create a Management Plan in which Recreational Rockhound must be included as a recognized Recreational Activity or the Rockhound Community may lose access to these collecting areas. The fate of collecting lies in the hands of the Rockhound Community.

If you are interested in learning about any of the Public land actions in your state or area the bill (S-47) and law may be read at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-116s47enr/pdf/BILLS-116s47enr.pdf>

There are currently over 87 bills before Congress that may have an adverse affect on your ability to exercise your right to collect Rocks, Minerals and Fossils for your personal use. All Recreational Rockhounds need to join together and speak with one united voice if Recreational Rockhounding is going to be preserved for future generations to enjoy.