

## Collecting in Mt. Hood National Forest By Michael Brown

I recently stopped at a Mt Hood National Forest Ranger Station to get my Senior Pass. While there I asked about a particular area that I planned on going to collect some petrified wood. I was told that I couldn't take petrified wood from the National Forest. I stopped at a second Ranger Station and was told that I could only take rock from the National Forest by permit and only from designated National Forest quarries. I was a bit puzzled and was referred to Tom DeRoo the Mt Hood National Forest Geologist at the Headquarters in Sandy, Oregon.

I believe most rockhounds are familiar with that part of the Code of Federal Regulations that limits collecting petrified wood to 25 pounds plus one piece per day and 250 pounds a year from federal lands. This specific free use limit is defined in Title 43 Section 3622.4 for all public lands administered by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Bureau of Reclamation. It does not include National Forest land. Guidance for free use in National Forests is contained in Title 36 Part 228.62 but is not specific on petrified wood quantities.

Looking to know the National Forest restrictions I spoke to and corresponded with Tom DeRoo about amateur rock collectors and collecting material in Mt. Hood National Forest. Summarizing our discussion - rockhounds may collect in the Mt. Hood National Forest other than those identified as Wilderness or Watershed without a permit as long as:

- quantities of petrified wood do not exceed the BLM 25 pounds per day plus one piece and 250 pounds per year;
- the material is for personal, non-commercial use;
- the material is of no archeological value (all artifacts, including projectile points, chips and flakes may not be collected);
- no mechanical equipment or blasting is used;
- no significant surface disturbance results (fill all excavated holes); and
- collection does not conflict with existing mineral permits, leases, claims, or sales.

As long as we follow these guidelines and the Rockhound Code of Ethics we should not cause any problems collecting in Mt. Hood National Forest. If problems arise in the future then the guidelines may have to be revisited.

I suggest that if you are going to collect in Mt. Hood National Forest you first stop at a Ranger Station and pick up a current copy of the forest map so that you clearly know where the Wilderness and Watershed areas are so you do not inadvertently stray into one. These guidelines are being provided to the Mt. Hood National Forest Ranger Stations so that we are all familiar with what is acceptable free use by amateur rockhounds.