

# Ontario's Highlands Guide to Informational Resources for Recreational Geology

## Some Available References to Potential Collecting sites and Geological Points-of-Interest Within the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Region

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At the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization, we are committed to providing information and services that are of value to our membership, our visitors, and the tourism industry. We welcome your comments about this, or any other Recreational Geology resource at [geology@ohfo.ca](mailto:geology@ohfo.ca).

## Introduction

Ontario's Highlands is a newly established tourism region encompassing the Counties of Haliburton, Lanark, and Renfrew, and parts of Frontenac, Hastings, and Lennox & Addington, which has long been a renowned travel destination for geology enthusiasts. There is a wealth of diverse geological assets throughout the entire region, which is home to both the Mineral and Ordovician Fossil Capitals of Canada (Bancroft and Eganville). With consumers increasingly demanding unique and adventurous travel experiences, there is significant potential of developing these geological assets as general tourist attractors, which has led to one of the first product development initiatives of the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO). Over the past two years, the OHTO, in collaboration with communities across the region, has contributed to significant improvements to what has become known as the *Recreational Geology* experience. Generally speaking, Recreational Geology

encompasses hobby mineral and fossil collecting, geological education, and interpretive activities that give some appreciation of the land and our interaction with it.

Whether you are looking for informational materials about Recreational Geology to offer your tourism market, places where one might engage in rewarding geologically-themed experiences, or development opportunities to expand your offerings, you will find countless possibilities contained within the following resources – but first...

The single most important thing that must be said about any of the following references (and this will be repeated frequently) is that they rarely give any indication of whether a particular point-of-interest is on public or private property. **It cannot be overstated that just because the information about a particular location is publicly available, does not mean that the site is necessarily publicly accessible.** Whether seeking to enter a property, or publish specific information about it, you must determine the status of property rights and seek all appropriate permissions first.

As with any largely self-guided outdoor pursuit, it is ultimately up to each individual practitioner to use common sense and common courtesy, obey the law, and employ appropriate best-practices for the activity of their choice. **But**, it is up to each of us, as proponents of Recreational Geology and providers of information to act responsibly as well – especially where private property issues are concerned. We must take every opportunity to educate visitors and residents alike, reinforcing these basic principals at every turn, in order to ensure ample opportunity, and lasting enjoyment for everyone involved in this most unique and rewarding offering of Ontario's Highlands.

## Background

Although the activities of Recreational Geology have much in common with any outdoor pursuit, there are certain unique considerations for some – and then there are other aspects which have more in common with familiar heritage and culture activities than you might expect. So before we examine the existing informational resources for Recreational Geology, a certain amount of background should be covered first.

### **Property Rights & Access:**

Although there are many sites in the following references that may be found to be freely, publicly accessible for various activities, there are many more which are on private property, or which may have other pre-existing rights or alienations that could be limiting. In most cases, there is no indication of property status given for the sites listed in these references. It cannot be assumed that any are necessarily open to the public. Many private property owners *are* happy to welcome recreational users though, and we'd like to keep it that way – so again, please determine property status and obtain appropriate permissions first.

In the case of Recreational Geology, it is important to note that permissions may not just be limited to familiar *surface* rights and access. If all you're planning is a stroll in the woods to *look* at rock outcrops, then that may be all that is required, but since geology deals largely with things below ground level, mineral rights (sub-surface rights governed by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM)) also become a factor. Not only are surface and mining rights governed by different Ministries (Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) for surface and various other rights), they can each be owned or otherwise held by different people on a single

piece of property. Surface rights might belong to a private individual, but mining rights could be owned by the Crown, for example. Even in the case of lands which **do** belong entirely to the Crown, unpatented mining claims or other non-ownership rights may exist. Depending on the activity, these must all be taken into account and can be subject to change.

CLAIMaps is an online map application which gives a general indication of certain existing rights on a very detailed scale for the entire province – including Crown land and mining claims – so it is an excellent place to start. Geo-Claims (see resources below) also offers this information and more, but is not the official source for claims information. CLAIMaps can be accessed here:

<http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/en/mines-and-minerals/applications/claimaps><sup>1</sup>

Depending on your circumstance, you may also need to consult the MNDM directly through the Provincial Recording Office, the local Land Title and Registry office, district MNR office, or others. Once you narrow it down to a particular property of interest, these steps aren't as daunting as it may appear at first, but because every situation is different, you are entirely responsible to determine the status of these rights and ownership, and ensure that you have appropriate permissions to either publish information about, or enter onto any property for your specific purpose.

- For information about mining rights, you can reach the Provincial Recording Office in Sudbury toll-free at: (888) 415-9845, or go to this address for full contact information:  
<http://www.infogo.gov.on.ca/infogo/office.do?actionType=servicedirectory&infoType=service&unitId=UNT0031639&locale=en><sup>2</sup>
- If you need information about a private property, start here for a listing of Land Registry Offices in the Province: [http://www.ontario.ca/en/information\\_bundle/land\\_registration/content/STEL02\\_165696](http://www.ontario.ca/en/information_bundle/land_registration/content/STEL02_165696)
- To find the appropriate District Office for the Ministry of Natural Resources for general Crown land inquiries, click: [http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/ContactUs/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02\\_179002.html](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/ContactUs/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_179002.html)

Once you have identified a property of interest and determined rights-status, you may find the *Ontario's Highlands Recreational Access Toolkit* helpful in negotiating access with private owners and rights-holders. It contains general information about liability, example legal templates for things like waivers which can be used to help reduce risk, and other informational resources for both the recreational user, and a private rights-holder. The *Toolkit* can be downloaded from the OHTO's website at: <http://ohto.ca/resources/>.

## **Collecting:**

Unlike delicate flora and fauna, which live and thrive in their natural environments, geological objects (rocks, fossils, minerals, crystals, gemstones, etc...) do not propagate or flourish, but are subject to erosion and inevitable demise from the forces of nature – this is the rock cycle. Recreational Geology is unique amongst naturalist pursuits then, in that collecting is the primary form of conservation. Under normal circumstances, most forms of mineral extraction in the Province of Ontario would be strictly governed by the *Mining Act*, but because the MNDM recognizes the scientific, educational, recreational, and even economic benefits of hobby

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<sup>1</sup> A complete list of links contained in this document (by heading, and in the order in which they are referenced) is provided at the end for your convenience. As websites are updated, these links are subject to change, however. If a link should prove to be broken, please bring it to our attention (and let us know if you've got an updated address) at: [geology@ohto.ca](mailto:geology@ohto.ca).

<sup>2</sup> **TIP:** From this directory page you can find contact information for just about any Government of Ontario office or employee.

collecting, they have written a special exception to this rule – inspired in no small part by the extraordinary opportunities which exist in Ontario's Highlands.

Bancroft is *Canada's Mineral Capital* for good reason, but as you'll see, the special geological environment that has made it famous covers most of the Counties Haliburton, Hastings, Lennox & Addington, Frontenac, Lanark, and Renfrew that comprise the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Region. There are also three other distinct bedrock environments (like the one which has given rise to Eganville's Ordovician Fossil Capital claim-to-fame), plus glacial, and post-glacial deposits that can be found within our borders – all making for endless possibilities to engage in this rewarding hands-on experience that is unique to Recreational Geology.

Ontario's Official *Mineral Collecting Policy* defines and governs “hobby mineral collecting” (which includes fossil collecting and recreational gold panning). If your activity involves removal of geological material, but doesn't fit the definitions of this policy, or abide by the rules it sets out, you may be subject to the *Mining Act* or other legislation. Under the policy, groups or individuals may collect freely for personal enjoyment, but this exception does not apply to someone who intends to remove large quantities of material for sale, or operate a fee-to-collect site, for example. This is not to say that commercial activities are in any way discouraged or prohibited, just that different rules may apply. Also worth noting is something called a “special mining lease” offered by the MNDM, which makes it possible to protect a site as a public destination for hobby mineral collecting (such as the Bear Lake Diggings near Gooderham), and allows for a fee to be charged to help offset associated costs.

The *Mineral Collecting Policy*<sup>3</sup> is currently under review by the MNDM to ensure that it is consistent with recent changes to the *Mining Act*, so it is subject to change, but these changes are not expected to significantly alter the intent, or basic principles of the policy<sup>4</sup>. When the updated policy is ready it is expected that it will be released through the Ministry's website: <http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/>

Additionally, anyone engaging in Recreational Geology activities should be strongly encouraged to abide by the Code of Ethics provided by the Central Canadian Federation of Mineralogical Societies (referenced later in this text), whether they are a member of a CCFMS club or not: [http://www.ccfms.ca/Events/field\\_trips.html#Code](http://www.ccfms.ca/Events/field_trips.html#Code)

For more information about the rules governing mineral extraction in Ontario (recreational or otherwise), please contact the MNDM directly. Pam Sangster, Regional Resident Geologist for Southern Ontario (located in Tweed) is a great first contact. And as a representative of the Ontario Geological Survey, she can also be very helpful in identifying Recreational Geology opportunities in your area. Pam may be reached by phone at: (613) 478-5238, or via email at: [pam.sangster@ontario.ca](mailto:pam.sangster@ontario.ca).

### **Other Activities:**

There are many Recreational Geology activities that do not involve collecting, and certain places (like Provincial Parks) where it is not allowed. Most visible rock outcrops or geological formations are excellent interpretive opportunities to tell the story of the Earth – the *real* history of the Highlands, 1.5 billion years in the making – but relatively few are rewarding collecting locations. There would seldom be a circumstance where collecting and interpretive activities should be considered as mutually exclusive (in fact, they are quite complimentary),

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<sup>3</sup> The Policy may be temporarily unavailable online while the Ministry redevelops its website, so the most recently available version of the Policy has been included for reference as Appendix I.

<sup>4</sup> For more information about the Policy and the effect of recent changes to the *Mining Act*, please refer to Appendix II: “Hobby Mineral Collecting and the Law”.

but in rare instances where one might be a significant hindrance to the other, the larger benefit of each should be carefully weighed. Again, please refer to the CCFMS code of ethics.

Regardless of the associated activity, Recreational Geology should also seek to tell the stories of our interaction with the land, and geology's influence on our environment and culture – our “geoheritage” – not just the formation of the land itself. This is what distinguishes Recreational Geology from the individual activities of mineral collecting and geological education. In this way, geological interpretation can be incorporated into – even greatly improve – countless existing activities and events that might seem at first to be entirely unrelated. Why does a scenic drive in the Highlands look different than one in Prince Edward County? Why did so many European settlers turn from familiar agricultural practices to backyard mining to supplement their income? Why does this rare species of plant grow here and nowhere else? What makes Lanark County maple syrup taste different than others? The answer is – in every case – geology.

Please be aware though, some of these stories and activities can take you to sacred places and heritage sites where you might encounter early settlement, industrial, or First Nations' artifacts. Similar to geological material, archaeological artifacts can be damaged by the elements and are often best removed for their preservation, but unlike minerals, the disturbance or collecting of such artifacts by the general public is not sanctioned by the Ontario government, and is generally discouraged without proper supervision.

A significant portion of the information that can be gleaned from an artifact comes from knowing its precise, original discovery location. For this reason (amongst others), the removal of artifacts from archaeological sites is highly regulated by the *Ontario Heritage Act* and others. If you are interested in pursuing archaeology as a hobby or a career, however, there are several ways that the general public may participate in or learn about archaeological activities. For more information about pursuing an interest in archaeology, or what to do if you find an artifact, please contact the Ontario Archaeological Society at:

<http://www.ontarioarchaeology.on.ca/chapters.php>.

Any story – geological, heritage, and cultural – that can be linked to a stone structure, landform, or geological feature, is an opportunity for Recreational Geology. Go for a walk, hike, bike, dig, drive, or paddle – just tell a good story in the process!

### **Outdoor Activities:**

Recreational Geology can be a safe and enjoyable pass-time for families and people of all ages, but just like any outdoor activity, there can be risks. Not every Recreational Geology activity will find you into the woods, but you should always be aware of hazards typical to the environment you find yourself in – be they natural or man-made, marked or unmarked. Since an interest in geology may lead you to new places though, you should also be mindful of risks posed by things perhaps less familiar, such as abandoned mine workings or other settlement features like derelict buildings and old wells, unstable rock piles or outcrops, hidden exploration pits and trenches, rough or unmaintained roads and trails, or other unidentified hazards.

Whenever you engage in any type of wilderness activity, please honestly assess and act within the reasonable limits of your own ability; be sure you have, and know how to use the appropriate safety and emergency gear; take a friend, and tell someone where you're going.

Remember, being allowed to collect does not necessarily follow from being allowed to enter. And just because

you can, doesn't always mean you should. Hobby Mineral Collecting in the Province of Ontario is a privilege, not a right. Like so many outdoor activities, Recreational Geology relies on the conduct of its proponents and its practitioners to ensure that its legitimacy and benefit continues to be recognized, and that its opportunities remain available to the public. Respect others' rights, heed their wishes, obey the law, and be safe! And now, without further ado...

## **Informational Resources for Recreational Geology in Ontario's Highlands**

The following is a partial list of published resources that would be helpful to anyone wishing to find information about Recreational Geology activities, where one might engage in them, and how to develop related tourism experiences in Ontario's Highlands (and beyond). Depending on your level and area of interest, some may be of more practical use than others, but the reader should attempt at least a cursory familiarity with all, as included below are the primary resources that have guided these activities to date – and those which represent the best opportunities to expand the initiative in future.

### **Printed Guides:**

Guidebooks are at the top of this list, not because they are necessarily the best source of information for potential points-of-interest (POIs), or because you are (in every case) likely to find anything “new” in them, but because everyone interested in Recreational Geology should at least be *aware* of these staples of the geological enthusiast. You may, however, find several existing POIs of which you were previously unaware, and being intended for a general audience, you will definitely benefit from the wealth of historical and interpretive information they contain – for both well-known attractions, and the region as a whole. This is by no means a comprehensive list, but the following are recommended:

#### **1. *Rocks and Minerals for the Collector* – guidebook series by Ann P. Sabina. Published by the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) in both English and French:**

This is a national series with several volumes, each covering a part of the Country (some out-of-print). There are four books which cover parts of Ontario's Highlands (more than any other region in the Country, by the way). These books are intended specifically as collecting guides, but they also contain some POIs of more general geological interest, and a considerable amount of historical and interpretive information. This is the one reference that will sometimes indicate that one must first approach owner 'X' for permission to visit certain sites, but some of this information may be found to be out-of-date, and there are many sites listed that are on private property, for which no such instruction is given. Again, it should not be assumed that seeking permission is unnecessary for sites where no such instruction is given.

- Sabina, A. P., 1987 – *Rocks and Minerals for the Collector: Hull-Maniwaki, Quebec; Ottawa-Peterborough, Ontario, GSC Miscellaneous Report 41*
- Sabina, A. P., 1983 – *Rocks and Minerals for the Collector: Kingston, Ontario to Lac St-Jean, Quebec, GSC Miscellaneous Report 32*
- Sabina, A. P., 1986 – *Rocks and Minerals for the Collector: Bancroft – Parry Sound area and*

*Southern Ontario, GSC Miscellaneous Report 39, 1986*

- Sabina, A. P., 2007 – *Rocks and Minerals for the Collector: Ottawa to North Bay and Huntsville, Ontario; Gatineau (Hull) to Waltham and Temiscaming, Quebec, GSC Miscellaneous Report 48*

This last publication may be downloaded as a PDF file here:

[ftp://ftp.nrcan.gc.ca/ess/publications/geopub/mr\\_48\\_e.zip](ftp://ftp.nrcan.gc.ca/ess/publications/geopub/mr_48_e.zip)

Others in this series are available in many libraries (including those held by various mineral clubs), and copies may be available for purchase directly from the GSC. For more information about this series, please contact the GSC contact client services by phone at: 1-800-661-2638 or by e-mail at:

[geoinfo@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:geoinfo@nrcan.gc.ca)

The GSC bookstore also maintains an online list of other geological publications and guides (some of which are also available through the GSC) here:

<http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/products-services/publications/bookstore/6923>

## **2. Eyles, N., 2012 – *Road Rocks: Ontario: A Geological Travel Guide***

As of the time of this writing, this book has not yet been released, but the author has indicated that it is intended – as the name suggests – as a take-it-with-you guidebook for geologically-themed travel. Although it does not focus exclusively on the Ontario's Highlands Region, because of our special geological environment, it will be extensively featured. It will be available through all major booksellers. **Based on the author's previous works, it is highly recommended that anyone wishing to encourage Recreational Geology in Ontario's Highlands review or obtain copies of this book.**

## **3. Eyles, N., 2002 – *Ontario Rocks: three billion years of environmental change; Fitzhenry & Whiteside***

Although not as much of a guidebook, but rather more of an interpretive guide (and again, not exclusive to the Highlands), this work features extraordinary information about the region (and for many individual POIs within) that is extremely well-written, and very accessible for a general audience. Reading it gives an excellent impression of the importance of geology in our everyday lives, and using the information it contains could lead to the development of numerous rewarding geologically-themed experiences.

## **4. Hewitt, D. F., 1969 - *Geology and Scenery, Peterborough, Bancroft and Madoc Area; Ontario Department of Mines Geological Guide 3***

As with *Road Rocks*, This guide contains several driving routes to numerous POIs in Ontario's Highlands. It is out-of-print, and some of the directions may be out-of-date, but the routes and POIs still exist. With a little updating and appropriate permissions from the MNM (formerly Ontario Department of Mines) and others, these tours could be re-packaged fairly easily. The interpretive information given for the individual POIs and the region as a whole remains entirely relevant, however.

It is available as a downloadable PDF file from the Ontario Geological Survey (OGS):

<http://www.geologyontario.mndmf.gov.on.ca/mndmfiles/pub/data/imaging/GB03/GB03.pdf>

**5. Hewitt, D. F. & Freeman, E. B., 1972 – *Rocks and Minerals of Ontario; Ontario Department of Mines Geological Circular 13***

This book lies somewhere between an educational reference, and a field-guide to Ontario rocks and minerals. It is perhaps not as well suited for a general audience as the other books listed above, but is an excellent resource for those who wish some more in-depth information about the subject.

It is also available as a download from the OGS (original 1966 edition):

<http://www.geologyontario.mndmf.gov.on.ca/mndmfiles/pub/data/imaging/S013/S013.pdf>

**6. Udd, J. E., 2005 – *A Guide to the Mineral Deposits of Southeastern Ontario and Southwestern Quebec; CJ Multi-Media Inc.***

This book is a list of known deposits and occurrences (similar to the Mineral Deposit Inventory listed in Online Resources below), compiled from an astonishingly complete reference set for the area. In only a few cases is there any significant amount of detail provided (likely dependent upon the level of detail provided by the original sources), and many notable occurrences are duplicated in other publications, but there can be little question that it contains references to sites that would not otherwise be easily found.

It is available through the publisher at 89 Ridgefield Cr., Ottawa, Ontario, K2H 6T1, or the Bancroft & District Chamber of Commerce.

Hard-copies of most (if not all) of the above references, as well as countless other printed reports, guides, and maps are available for viewing and/or borrowing from the libraries of both the National and Provincial Geological Surveys. See contact below for the Ontario Geological Survey Library at the Regional Resident Geologist Office in Tweed, or contact Pam Sangster directly (contact above). For the Geological Survey of Canada (Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) library) in Ottawa, see here:

<http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/about/organization/organization-structure/geological-survey-of-canada/9590>

**Human Resources:**

Any printed reference runs the risk of becoming immediately obsolete, so it is wise to consult experts in the field when up-to-date information is required. Additionally, following up on the ground, or creating more detailed, or more 'accessible' interpretive material usually requires specialized knowledge. Here is a list of key organizations whose mandates include public outreach and education, and whose staff and members can be of tremendous help in this regard. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and does not include contract professionals for hire, but these key contacts will at the very least, be able to lead you to other agencies and individuals who can be of assistance.

**1. The Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO)**

Based on the extraordinary geological assets which are known to exist here, our Recreational Geology Steering Committee and Project Coordinator are currently overseeing regional development of

Recreational Geology opportunities within the Highlands as our first major destination development initiative. They can offer insight into what types of attractions are currently being improved; informational products (like this one) that we are producing for the region; and can facilitate communication and cooperation between tourism stakeholders and other organizations. Michael Bainbridge, our Project Coordinator, may be reached at [geology@ohto.ca](mailto:geology@ohto.ca). Our membership also includes operators and promoters of geologically-themed attractions whose experience may be useful. We are also constantly working to expand the Recreational Geology section of our website, which includes information for the consumer, and market-ready attractions:

<http://ontarioshighlands.ca/things-to-do/geology/>

If you're the operator of a geology-related attraction or experience, but don't see your business listed, or have any other questions or comments about Recreational Geology, please let us know at the email above.

## **2. Ontario Geological Survey (OGS) – a division of the MNDM**

Depending on your individual requirements, the Regional Resident Geologist Office is often the primary source of information about Ontario's geological resources and MNDM regulations. In any event, they are *always* an invaluable first-contact. They can provide expertise for outreach activities directly – even produce educational/interpretive materials in-house – and assist you in finding other skilled professionals in various geology-related disciplines. The regional office for southern Ontario is in Tweed. Pam Sangster is the Regional Resident Geologist for Southern Ontario, and may be reached by phone at: (613) 478-5238, or via email at: [pam.sangster@ontario.ca](mailto:pam.sangster@ontario.ca)

## **3. Central Canadian Federation of Mineralogical Societies**

This is an umbrella organization for numerous local mineral and geology clubs in our surrounding area (there are three immediately within the Highlands). The Ontario's Highlands is the primary field-trip destination for members of these clubs – sometimes referred to as the “enthusiast market” for Recreational Geology. Despite the fact that these club members are indeed enthusiastic consumers of geology-related experiences, in this context they should not be viewed as a market to be exploited, but rather sought after as a development partners.

For example: the Bancroft & District Chamber of Commerce manages the tourism experience of mineral collecting in the “Bancroft Area”, but they have always relied heavily on volunteer support from the Bancroft Gem & Mineral Club for events like the Gemboree, and information about collecting sites such as are included in their guidebook. While each of their motivations for doing so are different (economic development and public outreach, respectively), both have a vested interest in reaching a broader audience to attract new interest to the activity, and the area.

Well managed relationships between the business and hobby of geological tourism can be a boon to both. If you are a business or organization with an interest in Recreational Geology, work on cultivating such a relationship with the members of your local club – maybe start by attending a meeting! A directory of member clubs can be found on the CCFMS website here:

<http://ccfms.ca/clubs.html>

#### 4. Major Museums

The Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, the Miller Museum of Geology in Kingston, and the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto all have extensive collections of rocks and minerals with particular focus on the Ontario's Highlands region (known to them as the Central Metasedimentary Belt of Ontario). Their curatorial and research staff are all quite approachable and helpful, and many are intimately familiar with the geology of our area. For the more cultural/heritage aspects of Recreational Geology (First Nations interaction with the land and mining heritage), you will find the Archaeology and History department of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau quite helpful. Be sure to ask about travelling exhibits from all!

- Canadian Museum of Nature (see Earth Sciences under both Collections and Research):  
<http://nature.ca/en/about-us/museum-corporation/staff-directory/staff-department>
- Miller Museum of Geology:  
<http://geol.queensu.ca/museum/>
- Royal Ontario Museum:  
<http://www.rom.on.ca/collections/curators/tait.php>
- Canadian Museum of Civilization (see Archaeology and History):  
<http://www.civilization.ca/about-us/contact-us/general-information/staff-directory/research-collections>

Within the Highlands, attractions such as the Bancroft Mineral Museum, the Bonnechere Museum in Eganville, and Matheson House in Perth are already Recreational Geology destinations, but you will find that any small museum can be an excellent resource for local history and expertise. You may even discover a few items already in their collections that would be of interest to the geologically inclined.

#### 5. Area Universities (many of whom also have their own geology collections)

Not only is the Highlands (the Central Metasedimentary Belt) one of the prime educational/research field-trip destinations for the Universities of southeastern Ontario and beyond, the teaching staff and students of these institutions are often quite amenable to assisting with informational and development activities that coincide with their curriculum. The following is a list of major institutions in Southern Ontario with dedicated Geology programs / departments. Department Secretaries/Administrative Assistants are often very helpful first-contacts:

- University of Ottawa  
<http://www.earth.uottawa.ca/personnel.html>
- Carleton University in Ottawa  
<http://www.earthsci.carleton.ca/contact-us>
- Queens University in Kingston  
<http://geol.queensu.ca/>

- University of Toronto (professional home to rock star, Nick Eyles, by the way (see Printed Guides above))  
[http://www.geology.utoronto.ca/contact\\_us](http://www.geology.utoronto.ca/contact_us)
- University of Waterloo  
<http://www.earth.uwaterloo.ca/contact>

Other Universities and departments can also be helpful in providing access to information and resources for more heritage/culture-related activities – archaeology and history, for example. Ask about programs like Trent University/Haliburton County's community-based research partnership, U-Links (<http://www.haliburtoncooperative.on.ca/ulinks/>). Various Community Colleges throughout the area also have relevant programs whose staff and students may be of assistance.

## 6. Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)

Aside from the land-use planning and management functions coordinated through their District Offices, the MNR also maintains the *Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)* database for Ontario. Despite MNDM's governance of geological resources in general, the MNR maintains the ANSI – including its Earth-Science designated (geologically-related) sites. For more information about the ANSI, please contact the Natural Heritage, Lands and Protected Spaces Branch of the MNR in Peterborough:

<http://www.infogo.gov.on.ca/infogo/office.do?actionType=servicedirectory&infoType=service&unitId=UNT0019101&locale=en>

The ANSI database can also be accessed online, here (click on “Natural Areas” on the left):

<https://www.biodiversityexplorer.mnr.gov.on.ca/nhicWEB/mainSubmit.do>

### **Online Resources:**

The internet has become the best source of information for Recreational Geology, far surpassing the guidebooks that traditionally fuelled these activities in terms of both of quantity, and quality of information available. These online resources can, however, be difficult to navigate in some cases, and many people – even much of the enthusiast base – remain entirely unaware of their existence, and/or unfamiliar with their use. By simply helping the geologically inclined become more aware of these informational portals, we can very quickly and very cheaply increase traffic to our area – allowing them to do much of the research and legwork themselves as self-guided experiences. By maintaining good relationships with the local clubs, tourism businesses and stakeholders can in this way, cultivate a development army who can help vet this information, and the quality of tourism experiences to which it might lead.

Ultimately, to reach a broader market than those who are willing and able to research their own opportunities to engage in the activity of their choice, we must still develop guided offerings and informational materials that appeal to a more general audience, but this is an important step to help narrow the focus of which potential targets should be examined more closely. Much of this information is provided without reliable indication of property status, or comment on best-practices for its use in this context, however. New informational delivery methods allow for more prominent placement of disclaimers and terms-of-use – often even requiring specific acceptance of such – but these can still easily be forgotten or ignored.

At the end of the day, we are no more responsible for this information than we are able to control its use or distribution – it’s already out there, and people are already using it. But again, if we are to promote its use in this context, we must also take care to promote its *responsible* use for this purpose.

1. **Geology Ontario:** <http://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/>

This is the primary delivery portal (and currently the only searchable one) for the informational products of the Ontario Geological Survey. It is comprised of six major components, four of which are of particular interest to Recreational geology. Launching the Geology Ontario application and selecting the appropriate reference set (some of which are described in detail below) will launch the “traditional” search options for that set, but the new “Geology Ontario Fast” search function available on the main page is in many ways vastly superior, allowing full-text search capability within **all** electronic records at once. Results may then easily be refined by reference set, geographical area, etc...

*Full-text search tip:* many publications and records have been created exclusively for, or contain specific reference to occurrences that might be of interest to collectors and geological enthusiasts. “MINERAL SPECIMEN” is actually a recognized commodity, and there are numerous deposits named “FOSSIL SITE – X”, for example. A simple search for “mineral specimen”, “collecting”, “fossil”, or the like will return many interesting results. Use your imagination, and if you start to see common words or phrases being used to describe certain types of deposit that are of interest, try using them as search terms.

- Mineral Deposits and Occurrences

The Mineral Deposit Inventory (MDI) is the single best public informational resource about potential mineral/fossil collecting sites and geological points-of-interest (POI) available. Although others may contain more detailed information about specific locations, there is not one which contains as much information, about as many locations, compiled from such a comprehensive list of sources as the MDI. There are more documented occurrences contained here than in any other single reference for the Province of Ontario, and more of them are found within the borders of Ontario's Highlands than in **any** other region. **When looking for “new” POIs and potential collecting sites, this should be the first reference you consult** as you will find that many of the others that you will encounter have already been indexed here.

The MDI is not itself a detailed reference like an original geological report or a guidebook, but rather more of an index to occurrences referenced in other texts. As such, an MDI record may be as simple as an anecdotal report of a mineral showing from over a hundred years ago, or as informative as site-visit reports including a detailed access description and GPS coordinates taken at the location of an old mine – the amount and quality of information they represent is highly variable, depending on what was contained in the original reference. Regardless of how much, or how little information may be contained in an individual record, the MDI is an indispensable one-stop-shop for preliminary research for this application.

The physical MDI files for southern Ontario (upon which the online version is based, and which sometimes contain more information) are kept at the Office of the Resident Geologist for Southern Ontario in Tweed. For more information about this resource, please contact the Resident Geologist Office directly (contact above).

- OGS Publications

This is a searchable index to the publications of the Ontario Geological Survey (technical reports, general interpretive guides, and geological maps, for example). In many cases you will find that these references have been scanned and made available in-full as downloadable PDF files (such as the guidebook links above). Searching for the title of a reference listed in an MDI report will often turn up the original text, saving tremendous amounts of time trying to track down a long out-of-print publication.

- Abandoned, Inactive Mine Sites and Mine Hazards (AMIS)

This is similar to the MDI, in that it is a searchable database of old mines, but given locations are considerably more accurate as the site will have actually been visited. There are not as many references here as in the MDI, but each AMIS record will link you back to the corresponding MDI entry for more detailed information on the deposit.

- Assessment Files

Although considerably more technical in nature than many of the references in OGS Pub, the AFRI option – scanned assessment work reporting required for mining claims – contains highly detailed information about many properties and deposits that might not be found elsewhere. This is often useful for more targeted research, once high-priority sites have been identified through other means.

## 2. Geo-Claims and OGS Earth

What is perhaps most unique about the MDI as an informational resource for this application, is that nearly every record (if not *every* record) contains at least Township, Lot, Concession, and physical coordinates associated with each deposit – making it much easier than with most other references to actually find a specific location. Be warned, however: many of the original references contain no such specific information as physical coordinates, so these are usually inferred or extrapolated – and added to the record after the fact. It is advisable that the reader refer to the *Point Location Description*, and *Location Method* fields for a general indication of a set of coordinates' source, and likely degree of accuracy. In practice, these coordinates rarely correspond precisely with a physical POI on the ground, but are generally sufficiently accurate to point to an area of interest – if not eventually leading to a specific target, then often resulting in unintended discovery.

As is usually the case with such sources of information for potential geological POIs, however, there is no indication of land tenure associated with any of the properties described in the MDI (effectively: Crown land, or private property – although it's not always quite as simple as that). Until recently, it has been an arduous task to cross-reference the property information contained in references such as the MDI with even general sources for land tenure information. *Verifying* such information for critical applications still requires considerably more work (as indicated in the Background section above), but first-pass research exercises to narrow the search for occurrences that *might* be on Crown land are now made much easier by the introduction of new features in applications like Geo-Claims and OGS Earth.

In both of these informational products produced by the MNDM, coordinates contained within MDI records can now be shown as points on a base map (Google Earth satellite imagery, in the case of OGS earth). Activate the appropriate land tenure layers, and one can very easily see which MDI records correspond to properties that might be publicly accessible. There are many other useful layers and features in both OGS Earth and Geo-Claims (including geo-spatial representation of the other Geology Ontario resources mentioned above, and geological map overlays), but for all intents and purposes, these informational portals are essentially equivalent for most applications. Due to the graphics-intensive nature of Google Earth, however, it can run much slower, and information is not always as easily discernible. For these reasons, and because Geo-Claims layers are perhaps more consistent and accurate (limitations stated in its terms-of-use notwithstanding), Geo-Claims is generally recommended for ease of use.

- **OGS Earth is available here:** [http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs\\_earth\\_e.asp](http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs_earth_e.asp)
- **Geo-Claims may be accessed here:**  
<http://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/website/geoclaims/>

3. **Planetocks.ca:** <http://planetocks.ca/>

Planetocks is a web-based geological tour guide for the province of Ontario created by Nick Eyles, author of *Road Rocks* (and other popular geology guides). Using Google maps, plus satellite and street-view imagery, you can take a virtual tour of hundreds of geology and geoheritage points-of-interest from the comfort of your own home. By downloading the companion mobile app, you can take Planetocks on the road and use its 'hot button' feature to alert you and unlock content as you approach a site. New sites are being added regularly – especially in the Ontario's Highlands Region.

4. **Mindat.org:** <http://www.mindat.org/>

Mindat is the internet's largest resource for information about minerals and their locations. It has over 20,000 registered users, and averages nearly 300,000 unique visitors per month. Mindat serves two primary functions: wiki-style (user contributed) informational database, and online community forum – essentially, it's a cross between Wikipedia and Facebook for mineral enthusiasts.

On the one hand, it is used, and contributed to, by both well-respected academics in the fields of mineralogy and geology, and enthusiastic amateurs – making it a unique reference for general information on these subjects, as well as specific information about the minerals and locations of a given area.

On the other, it is a social media site of sorts, for an international community of mineralogical enthusiasts. As such, it is an unparalleled opportunity to communicate with, and receive feedback from this "market". There is an obvious opportunity to target users of this site for their interest in Recreational Geology experiences, and they are genuinely interested in receiving such information. They should, however, be treated with the same respect as members our local mineral clubs – many of them know more about these topics than any of us, and they do not kindly suffer thinly veiled attempts at advertising in the community forums. It is, however, also an excellent targeted marketing venue, with many sanctioned advertising opportunities such as page banners and sponsorships.

Although the interface can be somewhat overwhelming at first, it is worth taking some time to familiarize yourself with its functions. The primary basic functions are found at the top right of the page (and at the bottom) under “Search Mindat”. You may wish to start by simply searching for a geographical division (such as one of the Townships or Counties of Ontario's Highlands) in the “Locality Name” field. This will return all minerals and sub-localities listed in the database for this area. This can be an excellent way to get statistical information about an area.

To enquire about advertising and sponsorship opportunities, contact site-founder, Jolyon Ralph at [jolyon@mindat.org](mailto:jolyon@mindat.org).

5. **Geology.com:** <http://geology.com/>

This site is not as useful a resource for specific information about the Ontario's Highlands region as others, but is an excellent source for news stories and general information about geology and related topics. It is also an excellent advertising opportunity for Recreational Geology products and services as it too has an enormous base of interested users.

6. **Mining Matters:** <http://www.pdac.ca/miningmatters/>

Mining Matters is a charitable organization supported by the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada who's website contains a great wealth of information intended for a general audience – kids in particular – to educate about, and generate an interest in geology and related industries. Of particular note, their links section:

<http://www.pdac.ca/miningmatters/educators/links.aspx>

### **Summary of Links (in document order):**

#### **Document Background:**

- CLAIMaps: [http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/claimaps\\_e.asp](http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/claimaps_e.asp)
- Provincial Recording Office (for mining tenure information):  
<http://www.infogo.gov.on.ca/infogo/office.do?actionType=servicedirectory&infoType=service&unitId=UNT0031639&locale=en>
- List of Land Registry Offices in Ontario  
[http://www.ontario.ca/en/information\\_bundle/land\\_registration/content/STEL02\\_165696](http://www.ontario.ca/en/information_bundle/land_registration/content/STEL02_165696)
- MNR District Offices:  
[http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/ContactUs/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02\\_179002.html](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/ContactUs/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_179002.html)
- OHTO Recreational Access Toolkit:  
<http://ohto.ca/resources/>
- OHTO Recreational Geology Contact:  
[geology@ohto.ca](mailto:geology@ohto.ca)
- Ontario's Mineral Collecting Policy (to be announced):

<http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/>

- Central Canadian Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CCFMS) code of ethics: [http://www.ccfms.ca/Events/field\\_trips.html#Code](http://www.ccfms.ca/Events/field_trips.html#Code)
- Pam Sangster, Regional Resident Geologist for Southern Ontario: [http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs/resgeol/contact\\_e.asp](http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs/resgeol/contact_e.asp)
- Ontario Archaeological Society  
<http://www.ontarioarchaeology.on.ca/chapters.php>

## **Informational Resources**

### **Printed Guides:**

- Sabina, A. P., 2007 – *Rocks and Minerals for the Collector: Ottawa to North Bay and Huntsville, Ontario; Gatineau (Hull) to Waltham and Temiscaming, Quebec*, GSC Miscellaneous Report 48: [ftp://ftp.nrcan.gc.ca/ess/publications/geopub/mr\\_48\\_e.zip](ftp://ftp.nrcan.gc.ca/ess/publications/geopub/mr_48_e.zip)
- Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) Client Services: [geoginfo@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:geoginfo@nrcan.gc.ca)
- GSC resources for the collector: <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/products-services/publications/bookstore/6923>
- Hewitt, D. F., 1969 - *Geology and Scenery, Peterborough, Bancroft and Madoc Area; Ontario Department of Mines Geological Guide 3*: <http://www.geologyontario.mndmf.gov.on.ca/mndmfiles/pub/data/imaging/GB03/GB03.pdf>
- Hewitt, D. F., 1966 – *Rocks and Minerals of Ontario; Ontario Department of Mines Geological Circular 13*: <http://www.geologyontario.mndmf.gov.on.ca/mndmfiles/pub/data/imaging/S013/S013.pdf>
- Natural Resources Canada Library: <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/about/organization/organization-structure/geological-survey-of-canada/9590>

### **Human Resources:**

- Recreational Geology Project Coordinator for the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO), Michael Bainbridge: [mjb@theoccurrence.ca](mailto:mjb@theoccurrence.ca)
- Recreational Geology section of OHTO's website: <http://ontarioshighlands.ca/things-to-do/geology/>
- CCFMS directory of member clubs: <http://ccfms.ca/clubs.html>
- Major Museums:
  - Canadian Museum of Nature (see Earth Sciences under both Collections and Research): <http://nature.ca/en/about-us/museum-corporation/staff-directory/staff-department>

- Miller Museum of Geology: <http://geol.queensu.ca/museum/>
- Royal Ontario Museum: <http://www.rom.on.ca/collections/curators/tait.php>
- Canadian Museum of Civilization (see Archaeology and History): <http://www.civilization.ca/about-us/contact-us/general-information/staff-directory/research-collections>
- Area Universities:
  - University of Ottawa: <http://www.earth.uottawa.ca/personnel.html>
  - Carleton University in Ottawa: <http://www.earthsci.carleton.ca/contact-us>
  - Queens University in Kingston: <http://geol.queensu.ca/>
  - University of Toronto: [http://www.geology.utoronto.ca/contact\\_us](http://www.geology.utoronto.ca/contact_us)
  - University of Waterloo: <http://www.earth.uwaterloo.ca/contact>
- U-Links: <http://www.haliburtoncooperative.on.ca/ulinks/>
- Natural Heritage, Lands and Protected Spaces Branch of the MNR (custodians of the ANSI db): <http://www.infogo.gov.on.ca/infogo/office.do?actionType=servicedirectory&infoType=service&unitId=UNT0019101&locale=en>
- ANSI online (follow link, then click on “Natural Areas” on the left): <https://www.biodiversityexplorer.mnr.gov.on.ca/nhicWEB/mainSubmit.do>

**Online Resources:**

- Geology Ontario: <http://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/>
- Mineral Deposit Inventory (MDI) database download: [http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs/ims/pub/digcat/mdi\\_e.asp](http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs/ims/pub/digcat/mdi_e.asp)
- OGS Earth: [http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs\\_earth\\_e.asp](http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/ogs_earth_e.asp)
- Geo-Claims may be accessed here: <http://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/website/geoclaims/Disclaimer.asp>
- Mindat.org: <http://www.mindat.org/>
- Jolyon Ralph (Mindat founder) at [jolyon@mindat.org](mailto:jolyon@mindat.org).
- Geology.com: <http://geology.com/>
- Mining Matters: <http://www.pdac.ca/miningmatters/>
- Mining Matters links section: <http://www.pdac.ca/miningmatters/educators/links.aspx>

# Appendix I

## Mineral Collecting

Policy: L.P. 701-1

Date Issued: March 25, 2011

### Purpose

As stewards of minerals in the province, the *Ministry of Northern Development and Mines* recognizes hobby mineral collecting for its recreational and educational benefits to the public as a whole. Therefore the Ministry allows mineral collecting under conditions specified in this policy.

### Policy

Mineral collecting in Ontario is a *privilege* offered by the Province and is **not a right**. Hobby mineral collectors have no legal right to collect or extract minerals on Crown land or on land where title, an interest or right is held by a person or company, who is not the mineral collector.

### Types of Mineral Collecting

There are two types of mineral collecting recognized by the Crown: *hobby mineral collecting*, and *large scale/commercial mineral collecting*. The two types of mineral collecting are distinguished on the basis of a *threshold limit*, which is explained in the definition section of this policy.

### Legal Requirement

The *Mining Act* makes it clear that minerals cannot be extracted or removed without a lease of the mining rights, and compliance with the provisions of Part VII of the Act. Extraction can also be authorized in some cases by the *Aggregate Resources Act*. However, there is no specific authorization to remove minerals as part of a hobby collection.

### Hobby Collecting

Hobby mineral collecting is allowed *to the threshold limit*, where both surface and mining rights are owned by the Crown and open to mineral collecting.

The requirements, of the Mining Act and the Aggregate Resources Act, *will generally not be enforced* against hobby mineral collecting.

### Note

Since hobby mineral collecting is a privilege, it must not conflict with other legitimate uses and users of the same land. The mineral collector is not allowed to trespass on privately owned land, nor on Crown land where there are unsafe or hazardous conditions. Collectors are advised to obtain or consult

a claim map to determine land status.

All the laws regarding environmental protection which would be applicable to a prospector's licence holder, or other persons using the land, are applicable to hobby mineral collectors.

## **Large Scale or Commercial Collecting**

This will be done according to the provisions of the *Mining Act* or the *Aggregate Resources Act*, where applicable. Provisions of the *Public Lands Act* will be enforced where applicable.

Large scale/commercial collectors must obtain a lease or aggregate permit.

## **Mineral Collecting where Other's Rights Exist**

The following are examples of interests with existing rights; therefore, **permission is required for hobby collecting**:

- Holder of an unpatented mining claim. The claim holder has the **right** to explore for the minerals and the **right** to lease the claim, if all conditions of the *Mining Act* have been met. Therefore, **the holder of an unpatented mining claim has existing rights and interests.**
- holder of a land use permit
- holder of licence of occupation
- holder of an aggregate permit or licence
- lessee
- patent owner
- Ontario Northland Transportation lands
- summer resort owners
- Indian reserves

## **Permission Required**

The person intending to do hobby mineral collecting on land where there is a land owner, must first **obtain permission** from the person or company with the **existing right**. Such permission should be **in writing** to protect both parties.

The onus of finding out the status of the land (if a right exists) is on the mineral collector.

Different types of grants and interests in land exist, and more than one can exist on the same parcel of land. Typical of the status of land or existing right for which a mineral collector requires permission are listed below:

1. **Privately Held Surface Rights:** Where the mining rights only are owned by the Crown, *hobby mineral collecting is allowed to the threshold limit*, contingent on the surface rights owner's permission. The person intending to collect must follow any terms and conditions established by the person or company with the existing right. These may include restrictive conditions on

extraction methods. Examples - lease or patent for surface rights only; land use permit.

2. **Privately Held Mineral Rights:** Where the surface rights only are held or reserved to the Crown, the person intending to do the hobby mineral collecting must first obtain permission from the holder of the mining rights. The Crown cannot establish amounts of mineral that can be extracted, because the mining rights for this type of land have been granted or otherwise disposed of. The owner of the mining rights determines the amounts, terms and conditions of any mineral collecting activities. This may include charging for extracting the minerals. The owner of the mining rights will be responsible for meeting all the legislative requirements for mineral extraction. Examples - mining rights only unpatented mining claims; leased and patented mining rights; permits and licences issued under the *Aggregate Resources Act*. This does not exempt the collector from other requirements under other sections or Acts.
3. **Surface Rights and Mining Rights Held Separately:** Permission must be obtained from **both** holders in cases where the surface rights and mineral rights are held by two different parties
4. **Mining Rights Only Held:** The mineral collector needs the permission of the mining rights holder to take mineral sample(s).
5. **Mining and Surface Rights Held:** The mineral collector requires the permission of the mining and surface rights holder to enter the land and take mineral sample(s). The mineral collector requires permission of both the mining rights holder and the surface rights holder, when they are not the same party.
6. **Surface Rights Only Held:** The mineral collector must obtain, from the surface rights holder, permission to enter on the land; however, the Crown mining rights must also be open to mineral collecting.
7. **Crown Land:** By policy, Crown land is open to mineral collecting, with certain exceptions described below.

## **Lands Not Open for Mineral Collecting**

Some lands are not open for mineral collecting. Usually, other activities are also restricted on this type of land. Typically these lands can be related to land not open to staking. The following are examples of lands that are **not open** for mineral collecting:

- Public lands that are posted or otherwise marked to prohibit all or some activities. Check with the local *Ministry of Natural Resources* office for lands posted under the *Public Lands Act*.
- Areas which are part of a mining hazard or are hazardous to those attempting to collect minerals. Check with the Resident Geologist or District Geologist in whose division you want to collect minerals.
- Land that is not Crown land as outlined in section 1 of the *Mining Act* R.S.O 1990 (referred to as the Act).
- Indian reserves as set out in clause 30(e) of the Act
- provincial parks (section 31 of the Act), federal parks
- Lands withdrawn from staking, sale or lease under section 35 of the Act or one of its

predecessors.

**Note:** For the purpose of this policy, both the terms gold panning and fossil collecting are interchangeable with term *mineral collecting*. Therefore, gold panning and fossil collecting are subject to this policy.

### **Collecting Minerals by Institutions**

Collecting minerals by institutions for educational purposes, for displays at museums or other public places as well as for use in scientific research are *also subject to this policy*.

## **Definitions**

The definitions in section 1 of the Mining Act for minerals, mining claim, mining lands, and mining rights, patent, and surface rights apply to this policy.

### **Threshold Limit**

What one person can excavate with hand tools only and can carry unassisted, from a specific site or location. The limit is allowed once per year per site.

### **Hobby Mineral Collecting**

- collection for personal pleasure, recreation, or interest, and
- the amount collected is below the threshold limit, and
- the samples are collected for the collector's personal collection, and
- The collector has no intention to sell the minerals collected. Swapping minerals collected as part of hobby collecting is acceptable. This recognizes that swapping is part of a personal collection.

### **Large Scale Mineral Collecting (Commercial Collecting)**

- mineral collecting or extraction of minerals with the intention of selling, or
- the amount of mineral collected is above the threshold limit, or
- the collection is done with the use of mechanical equipment: plunger, dynamite, backhoe, mechanical or power equipment.

## Where to Find Information

1. Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
  - Mining Lands Consultants: Mining land consultants can help you access up-to-date claim maps on the internet. These maps show the status of mining lands in their mining division.
  - Internet: These maps can be printed from the internet at [CLAIMaps](#) or purchased from [OGS Publication Sales Office](#) in Sudbury, Ontario. The CLAIMS Client Services database can provide you with the name of the holder of an unpatented mining claim. This information is available on the [Mining Claims Information \(MCI\) web site](#) .
  - Resident and District Geologists: Resident and District Geologists can advise collectors about mineral collecting sites in their districts, including areas that are considered hazardous. They can also advise about publications on mineral collecting.
2. Ministry of Natural Resources
  - District Managers: District Managers can provide information on quarry permits, quarry licences, land use permits, licences of occupation and land use permits that have been issued by their ministry. They can give advice about other issues regarding public lands.
3. Land Registry Offices: For the names of the leaseholders or patent owners, the mineral collector should go the appropriate Land Registry Office.

## Glossary of Terms

The following terms of references are obtained from Section 1 the *Mining Act*.

### Crown

Crown in right of Ontario.

### Holder

When referring to the holder of an unpatented mining claim or a licence of occupation issued under the *Mining Act*, means the holder of record.

### Minerals

All naturally occurring metallic and non metallic minerals, including coal, salt, quarry and pit material, gold, silver and all rare and precious minerals and metals, but does not include sand, gravel, peat, gas or oil.

### Mining Claim

A parcel of land, including land under water, which has been staked and recorded in accordance with the *Mining Act* and the regulations.

### Mining Lands

Includes the lands and mining rights patented or leased under or by authority of a statute, regulation, or order in council, respecting mines, minerals or mining, and also lands or mining rights located, staked out, used or intended to be used for mining purposes.

### Mining Rights

The right to minerals on, in or under any land.

### Patent

A grant from the Crown in fee simple or for a less estate made under the Great Seal.

Surface Rights

Every right in lands; other than mining rights.

Unpatented

When referring to land or mining rights, means land or mining rights for which a patent, lease, licence of occupation or any other form of Crown grant is not in effect.

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Source: [http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/lands/policies/leases\\_licences\\_patents/lp701-1\\_e.asp#](http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mines/lands/policies/leases_licences_patents/lp701-1_e.asp#) \*

**\* The *Mineral Collecting Policy* is currently under review by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines to ensure that it is consistent with recent changes to the *Mining Act*, so it is subject to change, but these changes are not expected to significantly alter the intent or basic principles of the policy. Please also see “Hobby Mineral Collecting and the Law” which is included separately for more information about these changes. The Mineral Collecting Policy may also be temporarily unavailable from the above address while the MNDM is restructures its website, but this most recently available version of the Policy is included here for informational purposes.**

# Appendix II

## Hobby Mineral Collecting and the Law

The following is presented for discussion purposes only. It is not intended, nor should it be used, to provide legal advice. The reader should discuss any particular situation with their lawyer, insurance provider and other advisors.

Hobby Mineral Collecting (as indicated here by initial capital letters) is not a description of a single activity (what some may know as “Rockhounding”). Instead, it is a legal distinction laid out in Ontario’s **Mineral Collecting Policy**. Hobby Mineral Collecting (as defined and governed by the policy) would include panning for gold, gathering pretty rocks for a garden, picking up a souvenir from the beach, carefully extracting beautiful crystals from the ground, collecting fossils from a quarry, and so on.

The *intent* of the Policy is clear in its stated purpose:

“As stewards of minerals in the province, the *Ministry of Northern Development and Mines* recognizes hobby mineral collecting for its recreational and educational benefits to the public as a whole. Therefore the Ministry allows mineral collecting under conditions specified in this policy.”

The rules which govern these activities are also fairly clearly outlined in the Policy, so this document will not attempt to provide a comprehensive explanation, or legal interpretation of everything it contains. There are, however, two points which should be discussed:

### 1. **Why is the Policy necessary?**

First, it is important to note that the removal of geological material for any reason is strictly governed and highly regulated in Ontario by the *Mining Act*, and other legislation. The *Mining Act* is primarily concerned with commercial extraction though, so it makes no allowance for recreational enjoyment, research endeavours, educational activities, or personal use. Without the Policy, Hobby Mineral Collecting would be subject to the same regulations and requirements as commercial extraction – making it prohibitive to engage in these activities on a recreational basis.

Recognizing this, the Ministry created the Mineral Collecting Policy to give a special *exception* to the *Mining Act*, thereby allowing certain activities as a limited privilege. If your activities *do not* qualify as Hobby Mineral Collecting, then the regulations imposed by the *Mining Act* would apply. This distinction, and the conditions set by the Policy, apply equally to both Crown and private properties in Ontario, as the rules that govern extraction also generally apply equally to both.

There is however, one important distinction between Crown and private lands within the Policy, in that the collector must first obtain permission from all affected rights holders – primarily surface and mineral rights holders, but others might be affected. In the case where these rights are held by the Crown (subject to where others may also have pre-existing rights), the Policy effectively stands as this permission. For private property or rights, specific permission from the owner or rights holder is required, with the onus being on the collector to determine rights-status for any intended destination, and ensure that all necessary permissions have been obtained.

In some cases, a private property may be owned only at surface, with the mineral rights still belonging to the Crown. As per the original intent and wording of the Policy, one *ought* to be allowed to collect on such a property as long as you have the permission of the surface rights owner, but recent changes to the *Mining Act* have affected this particular circumstance – which brings us to point #2:

## 2. Modernizing the *Mining Act*

In 2010, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) began phasing in regulatory changes as part of their process to modernize the *Mining Act* (bringing it more in line with current industry, environmental, land-use, and other concerns). This is generally seen as a very positive step by all, but there is one unintended consequence of these changes which has affected Hobby Mineral Collecting.

The Mineral Collecting Policy contains a section entitled “Lands Not Open for Mineral Collecting”, which lists certain places where collecting is not permitted. One of them is:

“Lands withdrawn from staking, sale or lease under section 35 of the Act or one of its predecessors.”

Essentially, withdrawing a property “from staking sale or lease under section 35” also withdraws the Crown’s permission to engage in Hobby Mineral Collecting at that site. In response to landowner concerns over certain claim-staking activities in Southern Ontario, the following was recently added to section 35 of the *Mining Act*:

s35.1 (2): “In Southern Ontario, for lands where there is a surface rights owner and the mining rights are held by the Crown, the mining rights shall be deemed to be withdrawn from prospecting, staking, sale and lease as of the day this subsection comes into force.”

What this means is that collecting is now prohibited on any property described in the withdrawal above (in Southern Ontario: private ownership at surface, with Crown mineral rights beneath). The Ontario’s Highlands region is entirely contained within what the Ministry considers to be “Southern Ontario”, so this withdraw affects all such properties in Ontario’s Highlands.

In general, surface-rights-only ownership is not the norm, so there remain plenty of fully-Crown, or fully-private properties where collecting is still possible, but it is not uncommon to find that mineral rights remain the property of the Crown on old mining properties – including a number of “classic” collecting localities. In this case, it no longer matters if the surface owner grants permission, collecting is not allowed because the Crown has effectively withdrawn permission for its part.

The Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization has been assured by the Ministry that they did not mean to limit opportunities for Hobby Mineral Collecting in this way, and that they are currently working to update the Policy so that it is again consistent with its original intent, and current law, but such updates will take time. As of this writing, there has been no expected release date set by the Ministry, but as soon as the new Policy is available, we will work to bring it to the attention to interested parties.

In the meantime, everyone is advised to abide by the current (albeit unintended) prohibition of these activities on any property affected by section 35.1 (2) above.

**For more information about the regulations governing Hobby Mineral Collecting, please refer to Ontario’s Mineral Collecting Policy, and contact the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines directly.**

This document has been prepared for the Recreational Geology Project of the Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization as a part of its *Recreational Access Toolkit*. To download a full version of the Toolkit, please visit <http://ohto.ca/resources/>.