



# The Prospector

Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc.

GPAA Portland, Oregon Chapter



November, 2024

## President's Corner

Be careful, a scammer is texting members using my name (John Mink) asking that you respond to a 503 area code... it isn't me, please do not respond... try to get the full number or a screen shot.

Calling all Portland Prospectors! Now is your chance. At this meeting we will nominate the following positions;

President  
Treasurer  
and 4 Board members

The vote will be held at the December meeting.

So, if you are an established member, maybe you should throw your hat in the ring and help guide our club into the future.

As the current president, my term is up at the end of the December meeting and I am not available for another term. It's a great team, a great club, I hope for more and better of what everybody wants and I will help all I can. So it's your turn to jump in.

And let's support that ongoing raffle to help refill our coffers. Thank you everyone and see you at the meeting on November 17 at 1:30 pm

Stay warm everyone! See you at the February meeting.

*John Mink*



## Gold Prospecting in Oregon: 7 Best Locations & Laws

Gold prospecting in Oregon is an exciting and potentially rewarding pastime. The Beaver State boasts a rich gold mining history that dates back to the 1850s, with countless locations hiding untold amounts of treasure waiting to be discovered. So, grab your gold pan, and let's get started!

In this comprehensive guide, we'll explore gold prospecting in Oregon and uncover the top locations for gold panning and sluicing while delving into the legal aspects you should consider before embarking on your golden adventure. This piece will be your go-to resource for everything you need about striking it rich in Oregon.

## 7 Best Places to Find Gold in Oregon

There are still undiscovered treasures waiting for those who are willing to search for them. With its rugged landscapes and picturesque rivers, Oregon's diverse terrain provides countless opportunities for those passionate about gold prospecting.

Discover the breathtaking landscapes and fascinating past of Oregon's gold rush heritage. Uncover the hidden treasures and uncover the art of finding your own golden nugget.

Article continues on page 3

## From the Editor:

Not much to report on this month. I'm always happy to receive stories (true or not) and photos from club members. Send them to me at [wrshpmzshn@gmail.com](mailto:wrshpmzshn@gmail.com).

I've been producing the newsletter for seven years and it's time for me to pass it on to someone else. If you're interested please contact me at [wrshpmzshn@gmail.com](mailto:wrshpmzshn@gmail.com).

2024  
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**Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc.  
Secretary's Report - October 20th, 2024**

Sunnyside Grange  
13130 S.E. Sunnyside Rd., Clackamas, OR. 97086

**Meeting** was called to order at 1:30 P.M. by President John Mink who also led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Attendees** - 46 attendees and no guests were present.

**Meeting Minutes** - A motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary's Report of the previous month as written and published in the October newsletter.

**Treasury Report** - A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasury Report that Jessyca read for the months of September and October.

**President's Camping Trip** - John and his friend recently went on a camping trip to Mt. St. Helens. There is black sand up there and he thought that this would be a fun future outing for our club to do some prospecting.

**Record Gold Prices** - Gold prices are continuing to climb and is now at \$2,739.10 an ounce. It's the perfect time to go out and get some before the weather changes.

**\$10 Raffle** - Rocky Tester was showing us the items that we will be raffling off at our December meeting. We are selling \$10 tickets for the next 3 months. The 4 items are as follows: # 1 is a Gold Hog Sluice. #2 is a Flow Pan. #3 is a Gold N Sand and #4 is a Metal Detecting Kit of accessories. These are all great items so make sure that you buy yourself some tickets and maybe you can win one of these great prizes.

**Library Donations** - If anyone has any books related to mining laying around that they would like to donate just bring them in and give them to Steve and he can add them to our club library. It's getting that time of year with the weather changing and people will be staying indoors more so it's the perfect time for reading books.

**Parking Patrol Person** - We are looking for someone to volunteer to be directing people where to park in our parking lot. We only want people to park close to the entrance who load and unload stuff at our meetings and also handicapped people. A gentleman named Will said that he would volunteer to do this. We will have him wear an orange vest so he will be seen and everyone will recognize him.

**\$5 Raffle** - Gary Upton was the lucky winner of the Gold Nugget.

After a short meeting we are now having our **End of Summer Party**. Jessyca has brought some great food and it's now time to socialize and have fun!

The meeting was **adjourned** at 2:40 P.M.

Submitted by Yolande Kragerud, Secretary.



## Quartzville Recreation Corridor

The Quartzville Recreation Corridor is a well-known gold prospecting area in Oregon, located along Quartzville Creek, a tributary of the Middle Santiam River.

This area was at the heart of a gold rush in the 1860s, leading to the establishment of the short-lived town of Quartzville. Today, the corridor is a popular destination for gold panners and sluices, offering a picturesque backdrop for their treasure hunting.

The Quartzville Creek provides ample opportunities for gold panning, with its gravel bars and shallow banks holding the promise of gold flakes and small nuggets. The creek's waters run through a heavily mineralized area, resulting in the accumulation of gold deposits.

The corridor also has several abandoned mine shafts and tunnels, which experienced prospectors can explore.

## Rogue River

Rogue River, situated in southwestern Oregon, has a rich history of gold mining. Since the discovery of gold in the early 1850s, the river has attracted countless prospectors, establishing several mining towns along its banks.

Today, the Rogue River remains a popular destination for gold prospectors, boasting several sites open to the public for gold panning.

The Gold Nugget Wayside, a public recreation area near Gold Hill, is an excellent spot for novice and experienced gold panners.

Gold flakes and nuggets are found in the river's gravel bars, crevices, and surrounding black sand deposits. Another popular site along the Rogue River is the Briggs Creek area, once home to the Gold Ray Dam.

This site offers abundant opportunities for gold panning, with the creek's waters carrying gold deposits from upstream.

## Cow Creek Recreation Area

Cow Creek, a tributary of the Umpqua River, has been a significant source of gold since the 1800s. Today, the area attracts casual gold panners and experienced prospectors drawn to

its beautiful surroundings and rich history.

The creek's waters flow through an area with a high concentration of gold-bearing gravel, making it an ideal spot for gold panning and sluicing. The creek's numerous gravel bars also provide ample opportunities to find gold flakes and small nuggets.

The U.S. Forest Service has designated several sites within the recreation area for gold panning, ensuring visitors can engage in this activity without disturbing the local ecosystem.

## Sixes River

Located along the southern Oregon coast, the Sixes River is another gold-rich waterway that has drawn prospectors for over a century. The river's headwaters begin in the Klamath Mountains, a region with a high concentration of gold deposits.

As the river meanders towards the vast ocean, it gathers precious sediments rich in gold within its gentle curves and sandy shores. The Sixes River presents a diverse array of gold prospecting possibilities, encompassing activities such as panning and sluicing along its banks, as well as venturing into the nearby abandoned mines.

One of the most well-known locations for gold panning is the Sixes River Recreation Site, which is under the management of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Experience the joy of panning for gold in the river's gravel bars, surrounded by the awe-inspiring coastal scenery.

The Little Applegate River, a tributary of the Applegate River in southern Oregon, has a long history of gold mining. The river's watershed was the site of several gold Mines during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the Sterling Mine being one of the most significant.

Today, the Little Applegate River remains a popular destination for gold prospectors, offering a picturesque setting and a wealth of opportunities for finding gold.

The Little Applegate River's unique combination of history and natural beauty makes it a must-visit destination for gold enthusiasts.

The river's gravel bars and banks contain gold flakes and small nuggets, which can be found through gold panning and slicing.

Additionally, the surrounding hillsides and

abandoned mines offer more adventurous prospectors the chance to explore and search for gold deposits.

## Burnt River

Located in eastern Oregon, the Burnt River is another gold-bearing waterway that has attracted prospectors for over a century. The river's headwaters originate in the Blue Mountains, known for its rich gold deposits.

As the Burnt River winds through the arid landscape, it picks up gold-bearing sediments deposited in its gravel bars and banks.

The Burnt River offers numerous gold prospecting opportunities, from panning and sluicing along its banks to exploring the nearby ghost towns and abandoned mines.

One of the most popular sites for gold panning is the Burnt River Recreation Area, managed by the BLM. This site provides access to the river's gravel bars, where you can pan for gold and enjoy the rugged beauty of eastern Oregon.

## Sharps Creek Recreation Site

Nestled in the Umpqua National Forest, the Sharps Creek Recreation Site is a hidden gem for gold prospectors in Oregon. As the creek flows through the forest, it carries gold-bearing sediments deposited in its gravel bars and banks.

The creek's waters originate in the Bohemia Mining District, an area with a rich history of gold mining. The Sharps Creek Recreation Site, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, provides visitors access to the creek's gold-rich gravel bars.

Here, you can pan and sluice for gold while also taking in the pristine beauty of the surrounding forest. The recreation site offers an ideal setting for novice and experienced gold panners, making it a perfect destination for those seeking a tranquil gold prospecting experience.

## Gold Prospecting Clubs in Oregon

Gold Prospecting Clubs & Tours in Oregon  
By joining one of these gold prospecting clubs in

Oregon, you will gain access to valuable resources, meet fellow prospectors, and have the opportunity to explore and prospect in some of the state's most gold-rich areas. Here are three gold prospecting clubs we recommend.

### Eastern Oregon Mining Association (EOMA)

The Eastern Oregon Mining Association (EOMA) promotes responsible mining practices and miners' rights in eastern Oregon.

They strongly focus on preserving the region's mining heritage and ensuring that future generations can enjoy the benefits of this industry.

EOMA offers members access to over 100 mining claims, primarily in the Blue Mountains, known for their rich gold deposits. EOMA hosts educational seminars, workshops, and hands-on training sessions to help members improve their prospecting skills and knowledge.

### Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc. (PGPI)

The Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc. (PGPI) is a chapter of the Gold Prospectors Association of America (GPAA) dedicated to serving gold prospectors in the Portland area and its surrounding regions.

This club focuses on providing members with valuable resources and opportunities to network with fellow gold enthusiasts.

PGPI holds monthly meetings, often including guest speakers, demonstrations, and discussions on various prospecting topics. Members also have access to several GPAA mining claims in Oregon, where they can practice their prospecting skills and potentially find gold.

In addition to meetings and claim access, PGPI organizes group outings to gold-bearing areas for hands-on prospecting experience. These outings allow members to learn from more experienced prospectors and share knowledge, tips, and techniques.

The club also participates in community events, such as gold shows and educational presentations, to promote gold prospecting and responsible mining practices.

## **Willamette Valley Miners (WVM)**

Willamette Valley Miners (WVM) is a non-profit organization based in Salem, Oregon, dedicated to promoting the interests of miners and prospectors throughout the Willamette Valley and beyond.

WVM is dedicated to educating its members and the public about responsible mining practices, being good stewards of the environment, and ensuring continued access to public lands for recreational gold prospecting.

Members joining WVM can engage in monthly gatherings, which frequently showcase speakers, demonstrations, and chances to explore the newest prospecting techniques and equipment.

The club also organizes group outings to various gold-bearing areas in Oregon, allowing members to hone their skills and prospect with like-minded individuals.

WVM maintains several mining claims for its members, allowing them to prospect in areas with proven gold deposits. Furthermore, WVM actively engages in legislative and regulatory matters, advocating for the rights of miners and prospectors in the region.

## **Gold Panning Tours in Oregon**

Gold panning tours in Oregon provide an exciting and educational opportunity for individuals and families to learn about the state's rich gold mining history and try their hand at finding gold.

These guided tours often include hands-on instruction on gold panning techniques, demonstrations of modern prospecting equipment, and a chance to explore the beautiful landscapes of Oregon. Here are a few popular gold panning tours in Oregon:

### **Oregon Gold Trips**

Oregon Gold Trips offers guided gold prospecting adventures in the historic Bohemia Mining District in the Umpqua National Forest.

Their tours cater to novice and experienced gold prospectors and provide hands-on instruction on gold panning and sluicing techniques.

In addition to teaching you how to find gold, their knowledgeable guides share the history and geology of the area, enhancing your understanding of Oregon's gold mining legacy. Tours can be customized to fit your group's interests and skill levels, and all necessary equipment is provided.

## **Armadillo Mining Shop - Gold Prospecting Adventures**

Armadillo Mining Shop in Grants Pass, Oregon, offers gold prospecting adventures along the Rogue River. Their experienced guides instruct on gold panning and sluicing techniques, helping participants uncover gold flakes and small nuggets in the river's gravel bars.

The lovely Rogue River provides a beautiful backdrop for gold prospecting, and Armadillo Mining Shop's tours cater to both novices and experienced prospectors. We provide all the necessary equipment for your convenience, and our tours can be customized to suit your group's specific needs and interests.

## **Blue Sky Gold Mining**

Blue Sky Gold Mining offers guided gold panning tours in Oregon and Washington, allowing participants to prospect for gold in various locations throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Led by experienced gold miner Rob Goreham, these tours teach participants the basics of gold panning and more advanced prospecting techniques such as metal detecting and suction dredging.

Blue Sky Gold Mining's tours are designed to accommodate prospectors of all skill levels and can be customized to suit your group's preferences. Necessary equipment is provided; you can keep any gold you find during the tour.

Participating in a gold panning tour in Oregon will give you valuable prospecting skills and a deeper appreciation for the state's rich gold mining heritage. These tours offer a unique opportunity to explore Oregon's beautiful landscapes while embarking on a thrilling treasure hunt.

## **Gold Prospecting Law: Is Gold Panning Legal in Oregon?**

Gold panning is legal in Oregon, but you must follow certain regulations and rules to ensure

that your prospecting activities comply with state and federal laws.

Understanding these laws is crucial to protecting the environment, respecting the rights of other land users, and avoiding fines or legal issues. Here are some key points to consider when gold panning in Oregon:

## Land Ownership

The legality of gold panning depends on the type of land you are prospecting on. Public lands managed by agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the U.S. Forest

Service typically allows recreational gold panning.

However, certain areas may have restrictions or require permits, so it is essential to check with the appropriate agency before starting your gold panning activities.

## Private Property

Gold panning on private property without the landowner's permission is illegal. Always obtain written permission from the landowner before prospecting on private lands.

## Permits and Regulations

In Oregon, recreational gold panning does not generally require a permit. However, if you plan to use motorized equipment, such as a suction dredge, you will need a permit from Oregon.

## Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Additionally, specific rules apply to protect water quality, fish habitats, and other environmental resources. Familiarize yourself with these regulations to ensure your prospecting activities are legal and environmentally responsible.

## Designated Areas

Some public lands have designated areas for recreational gold panning, while others may have areas closed to prospecting. Check with the managing agency to determine which areas are open for gold panning and follow any posted signs or regulations.

## Claim Staking

Be aware of active mining claims where you plan to prospect. It is illegal to prospect on someone else's claim without permission. You can check for active mining claims by consulting BLM's LR2000 database or visiting your local BLM office.

## Leave No Trace

Always practice responsible gold prospecting by filling in any holes, removing trash, and leaving the area as you find it. This helps protect the environment and ensures that gold panning remains a legal and enjoyable activity for future generations.

## Do I Need a Permit in Oregon?

In Oregon, individuals can engage in recreational gold prospecting without needing a permit as long as they use non-motorized equipment like gold pans or small hand sluices. However, there are certain rules and regulations to keep in mind, particularly if you intend to utilize motorized equipment.

If you intend to use a sluice box, suction dredge, or other motorized equipment, you will need a permit from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

This ensures that your prospecting activities do not negatively impact the environment, water quality, and aquatic habitats.

To obtain a DEQ permit, you'll need to submit an application, which can be found on the DEQ website, and pay a small fee. The permit will outline the rules and regulations you must follow while prospecting with motorized equipment.

These rules may include limitations on the size of your equipment, the timing of your activities, the locations where you can prospect, and requirements for site restoration after prospecting.

Be sure to check for any additional rules or restrictions specific to the area where you plan to prospect, as regulations may vary depending on the land management agency.

## Where Can I Legally Pan for Gold in Oregon?

In Oregon, there are numerous locations where

individuals can engage in the legal activity of panning for gold, provided they adhere to the rules and regulations governing recreational prospecting. Here are some popular locations:

## Public Lands

On public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the United States Forest Service (USFS), recreational gold panning is generally allowed without a permit if you use non-motorized equipment.

However, checking for any site-specific restrictions or regulations before prospecting is essential.

## State Parks

Some state parks in Oregon allow gold panning, but you may need to obtain a permit or follow specific guidelines. Always check with the park management before conducting any gold prospecting activities.

## Private Property

If you have permission from the property owner, you can pan for gold on private lands. Be sure to obtain written consent and abide by the property owner's rules or restrictions.

To ensure that you are prospecting legally, constantly research the area where you plan to pan for gold and familiarize yourself with the relevant rules and regulations. Additionally, I respect the environment and other users of public lands, and I always practice Leave No Trace principles.

## Tips on Getting a Gold Claim in Oregon

If you're serious about gold prospecting in Oregon, you might consider taking a gold claim. A mining claim gives you the legal right to extract minerals from a specific area. Here are some tips for getting a gold claim in Oregon:

## Research

Before staking a claim, research potential locations to identify areas with promising gold potential. You can gather information from historical mining records, geological surveys, and online mining forums.

## Check Claim Status

Before staking a claim, verify that another prospector has not already claimed the land. You can do this by checking BLM's LR2000 system, which provides information on existing mining claims.

Familiarize Yourself with the Law: Understand the federal and state regulations governing mining claims, including the requirements for staking, maintaining, and working a claim. Familiarize yourself with the Mining Law of 1872 and Oregon's state mining laws.

## Stake Your Claim

Once you've identified an unclaimed area with gold potential, follow the proper procedure for staking a claim.

## Wrapping Up

Exploring the vast landscapes of Oregon can provide an exhilarating and potentially lucrative opportunity for those seeking adventure and hidden treasures. With its captivating gold mining history and breathtaking landscapes, the state offers the perfect setting for exciting prospecting expeditions.

From exploring the region's rich history to engaging in outdoor activities, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

However, it is important to show reverence for the natural world and adhere to all guidelines and regulations while undertaking your gold prospecting expedition. Ensure you acquire the required permits if you intend to use motorized equipment, and consistently adhere to Leave No Trace principles to minimize your impact on the land.

*Editor's Note:*

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The new **Washington Gold and Fish** pamphlet is now available. You must have it with you whenever you prospect in the state of Washington.

Download a copy to print here: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/hpa/types/prospecting>



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