



United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

Bakersfield Field Office
3801 Pegasus Drive
Bakersfield, California 93308-6837
www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield

(CA160)
3809

Dear: _____

Thank you for your letter or phone call of _____

You inquired about staking mining claims, gold panning and rock/mineral collecting on federal lands.

I recommend that you obtain a copy of Location and Patenting of Mining Claims in California, 2001 Edition. This BLM publication is available from this office or from the BLM State Office at 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1834, Sacramento, CA 95835. It will give you an introduction to mining rules and regulations and also give you step-by-step instructions on how to file a claim.

Before you file a claim, you must know the exact location of your claims. This can be determined by obtaining a copy of a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 1:24,000 scale topographic map of the area you are interested in mining or prospecting. In Bakersfield, Blueprint Services Company, 1100-18th Street (661-327-2501) carries many USGS topographic maps of California. The reason that it is important to have these maps is that they show the legal land grid. On federal lands in the western United States, land is described by Township, Range and Section. In order to fill out BLM and Forest Service (USFS) forms for mineral prospecting or for staking a claim you must know the legal location. The "legal location" is administered by Township, Range, Section and quarter-section of the land you want to prospect or mine. Additional information about USGS maps can be found on the Internet at:

For USGS geologic maps: <http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/>
For USGS map dealers: http://mapping.usgs.gov/esic/map_dealers/index.html

Once you know the exact location of the place you want to mine or prospect, you can use BLM's Land Status Maps to determine if the area is BLM, Forest Service, State, Military or Private land. BLM Land Status Maps are produced at a scale of 1:100,000 and available from the BLM State Office (see address above). An index map and order form for BLM Land Status maps is found in Attachment #1.

If the land on which you want to stake a claim is BLM or Forest Service land, it is important to know whether or not this government land is open to mining and prospecting. Closures to mining activity are shown and described in local BLM and USFS land use planning documents and on some BLM or USGS maps. To obtain this information, visit or write to your nearest BLM or

"Visit us on the Internet at www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield"

USFS office.

A listing of BLM field offices is found on the Internet at:

<http://www.ca.blm.gov/caso/fieldoffices.html>

A list of BLM offices in California is found in Attachment #2.

A listing of USFS offices is found at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/links/forests.html>

There are two local Forest Service Offices in Kern County:

Greenhorn Ranger District

P.O. Box 3810

Lake Isabella, CA 93240-3810

760-379-5647

Cannel Meadows Ranger District

P.O. Box 9

Kernville, CA 93238

Phone: 760-376-3781

If the land you want to prospect is on BLM or USFS land and that land is open to mining (“mineral entry”), the next thing you will want to know is if there are any active claims on that ground. Miners with active claims are supposed to place claim markers on their claims and have copies of their claim documents in the claim markers. But sometimes cows or people destroy the claim markers. So just because you see no claim markers does NOT mean that there is not an active claim in the area. To see if there is a claim on the land upon which you want to prospect, go to your local BLM office and ask to have access to public computer records for mining claims. This database will tell you if there is an active claim on the land of interest to you. You can also call BLM State Office Public Room at 916-978-4400 and ask to speak to a technician about federal mining claim records. If you know the legal location of the area you want to explore for minerals, BLM staff can tell you if there are any active claims in that area.

Sometimes the places you want go to on BLM or USFS land are isolated and require access through private land. It is your responsibility to know if you are on private or public land. It is also your responsibility to get permission from each private land owner through who’s property you want to cross on your way to BLM or USFS land. BLM land status maps (see discussion above) and county parcel maps and records (available for inspection at the Kern County Hall of Records, 1115 Truxun Ave, Bakersfield, 661-868-3485) can assist you in identifying and contacting private land owners.

If you have determined that the land you want to prospect on is BLM or USFS land, is open to mineral entry and has not already been claimed, the next thing to learn is what environmental restrictions may exist for your envisioned prospecting or mining activities for that specific area.

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All BLM and USFS land is open to “casual use” recreational rock and mineral collecting. “Casual Use” means activities that produce negligible environmental impacts using small-scale unmechanized equipment (e.g. gold panning). Vehicle use is considered “casual use” only if vehicles are used on approved off-road vehicle routes. If you want to do more than gold pan or collect a few pounds of rock specimens for personal use, you will need to get a formal mining permit from BLM or the Forest Service. BLM rules are found in 43 Code of Federal Regulations 3809. U.S. Forest Service rules are found in 36 CFR Part 228. Copies of these regulations can be found on the Internet:

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/cfr-table-search.html>

You can also request copies of these regulations from your local BLM or USFS office.

On BLM lands, if your activities exceed “casual use”, you must submit a Notice for exploration projects occupying 5 acres or less. For mineral development projects of any size that exceed casual use thresholds, a Plan of Operations is required.

On USFS lands, if you are collecting more than a few pounds of specimens or moving more than a few cubic feet of material, you must provide a “Notice of Intent” to the local USFS office. USFS will evaluate your proposed activities and determine whether or not they require a Plan of Operations.

Approval of a BLM Notice or BLM or USFS Plan of Operation involves environmental review. This review will produce either an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Report document. In addition it will be necessary for you to post a reclamation bond. The cost of the environmental review may become the responsibility of the miner/pro prospector, depending on the scope of his/her proposal. In addition to BLM and USFS requirements, there are many other permits and authorizations required by other county, state and federal agencies before any exploration or mining can take place. Your local BLM and USFS staffs would be able to direct you to those other agencies whenever you propose a mining activity that exceeds casual use. Some of the additional permits you would have to obtain are summarized in Attachment #3.

You asked where you can prospect for gold or collect mineral specimens in California. Unless specifically closed to mining claim location and casual use rock/mineral collecting, BLM and USFS lands are generally open to recreational mineral collecting. Information about specific areas where gold and other minerals are found in California are contained in publications by the U.S. Geologic Survey and the California Division of Mines and Geology. These agencies have many reports on mining and mining history in California. Mineral collecting localities generally can be found associated with old mining districts. Publications by the U.S. Geological survey describing these mining districts can be found at:

USGS Information Services
Box 25286
Denver, CO 80225
1-888-ASK-USGS (1-888-275-8747)

"Visit us on the Internet at www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield"

The USGS web site is: <http://www.geology.usgs.gov/books.html>

Publications by the California Division of Mines and Geology can be found at:

Publications Dept
Division of Mines and Geology
P.O. Box 2980
Sacramento, CA 95812-2980
916-445-5716

Their web site is: <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/dmg/index.htm>

A popular book about the mineral localities of Kern County, produced by CDMG, is County Report No.1 titled Mines and Mineral Resources of Kern County California (1961), by B.W. Troxel and P.K. Morton.

A popular book about mineral collecting localities in California is Minerals of California by H.Earl Pemberton (1983), Van Nostrand and Reinhold publishers.

Local gem and mineral societies and prospecting groups also have information on local gold panning and rock/mineral collecting localities in Kern County. You may want to contact the following clubs:

Kern County Mineral Society

- Founded: 1935
- Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3004, Bakersfield, CA 93385-3004
- Meeting Place: Kern County Veterans Hall, Corner Mt. Vernon & Ridge, Bakersfield, CA
- Day of Meeting: 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
- Bulletin: Pseudomorph
- Phone/e-mail: (661) 834-3128 / basonite@aol.com

Kern County Prospectors

The Mint
2926 16th St.
Bakersfield, CA 93301

A web site for mineralogical societies in California is found at:

<http://www.gemandmineral.com/cfms.html>

The California Mining Journal is a popular magazine that carries articles about mining and prospecting throughout the western United States. Geologists, Mining Engineers and assay laboratories sometimes advertise their services in this magazine. To subscribe to this magazine contact Justin Daniel, International California Mining Journal, P.O. Box 2260, Aptos, CA 95001-2260 (831-479-1500).

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BLM has a recreational gold mining area set up at Lake Isabella, California. Enclosed is a map showing where this area is and the restrictions in place for this area (Attachment #4). It has been closed to claims so that the public can have easy access to the minerals there. Additional information about Keysville can be obtained at:

<http://www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield/recmining.html>

Using a metal detector to collect minerals is a casual use activity. However, American Indian artifacts and sites as well as historic artifacts and sites over 50 years old protected under the Archaeological Resource Protection Act (1979) and requires an approved cultural resource use permit prior to any collection or excavation. If you find an artifact you must leave it where it is found and also leave the surrounding soils and site features undisturbed. You may wish to report the find to the BLM or USFS so that they can follow up with recording the artifact and its context to a site or as an isolated find. Requirements for obtaining a cultural or paleontological permit includes having an advanced degree in archaeology, paleontology, or a closely associated discipline. Permits are rarely given to individuals who lack advanced degrees or are not associated with a recognized university, college or other institution.

From this correspondence, I hope you see that recreational mining and rock collecting can be complicated undertakings in California when your activities exceed the level of "casual use". If you want to stake a claim and proceed with a commercial mineral extraction operation, there are many steps to take in a long and sometimes intense environmental and economic review process.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact Anne Falcon or Gregg Wilkerson at 661-391-6000

Sincerely,

Gregg Wilkerson
Certified Minerals Examiner
Solid Minerals Team Leader

Attachment #1: Index map and order form to BLM Land Status Maps in California

Attachment #2: BLM Offices

Attachment #3: Other government agency permits needed for mining in California.

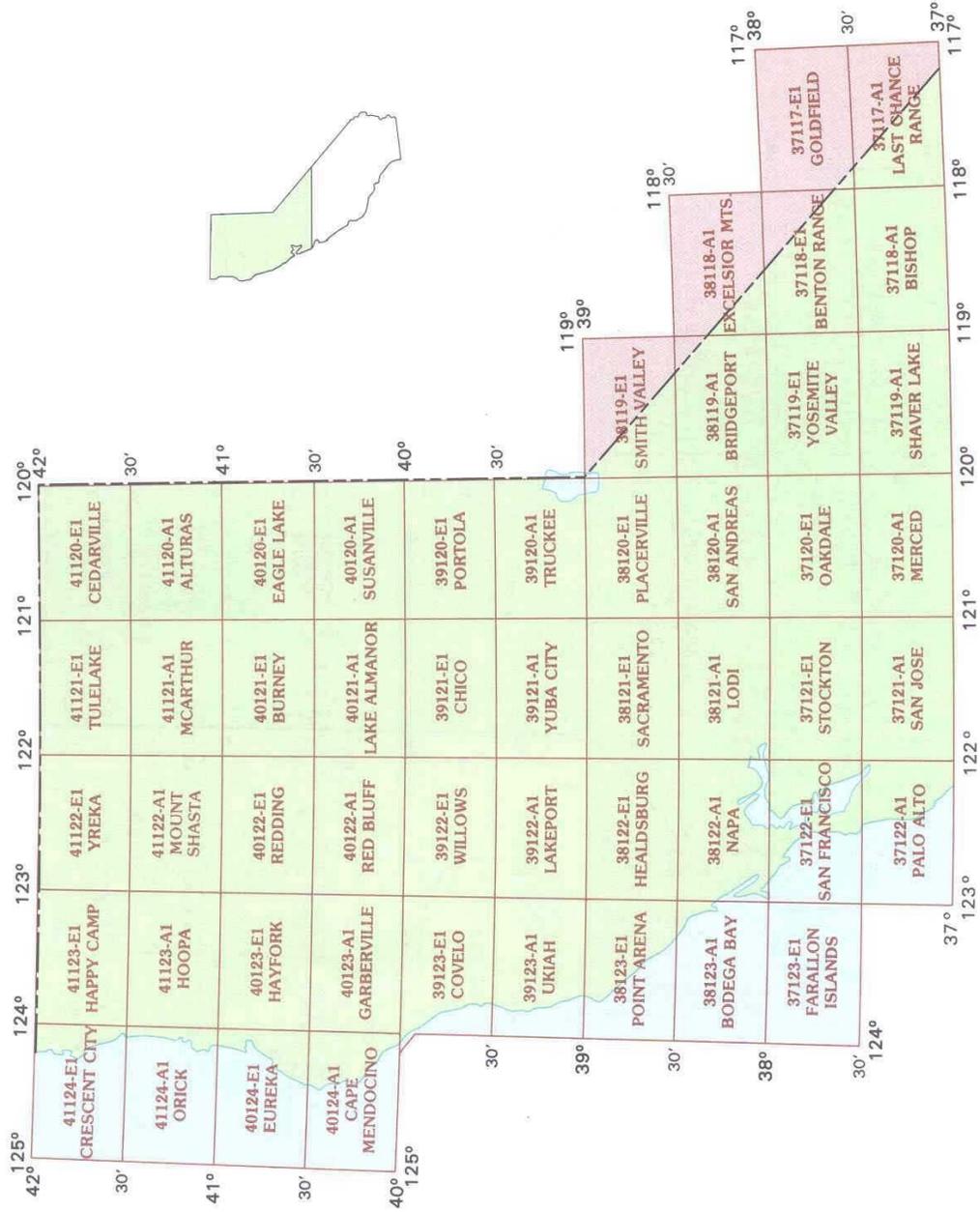
Attachment #4: Keysville Recreational Gold Panning Area

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Attachment #1: Index map to BLM Land Status Maps (next two pages)

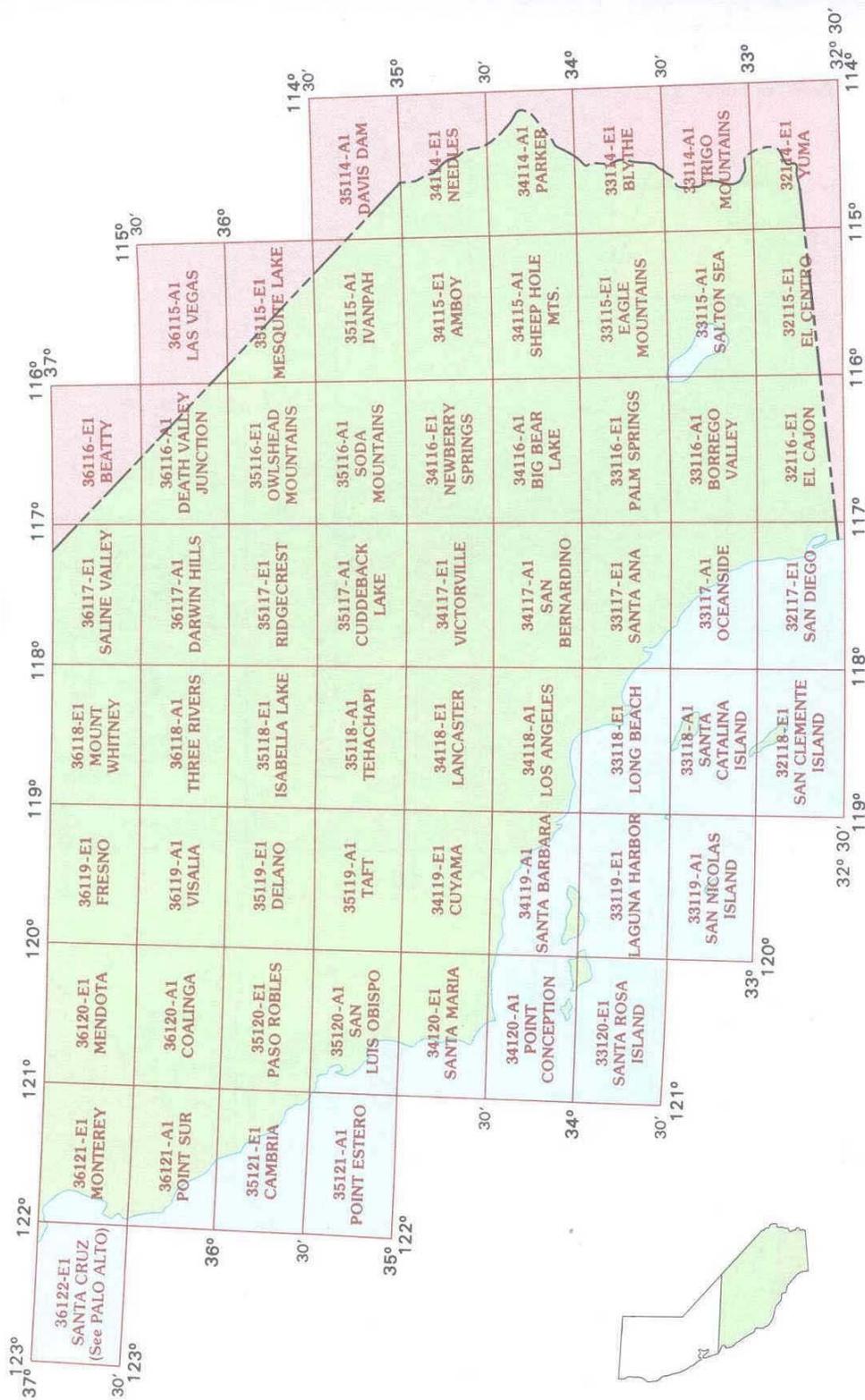
CALIFORNIA
NORTH HALF

30 X 60 MINUTE SERIES
1:100 000 SCALE



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30 X 60 MINUTE SERIES 1:100 000 SCALE



**ORDER FROM FOR 1:100,000 SCALE
BLM LAND STATUS MAPS IN CALIFORNIA**

MAP NAME

COST
(4.00 EACH)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

TOTAL FOR ALL MAPS:

\$ _____

Mail check or money order to:

Bureau of Land Management
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1834
Sacramento, CA 95835

"Visit us on the Internet at www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield"

Attachment #2: BLM Offices in California (page 1 of 2)

On the web:
<http://www.ca.blm.gov/fieldoffices.html>

Alturas Field Office
Tim Burke - Field Manager
708 West 12th
Alturas, CA 96101
(530) 233-4666

Arcata Field Office
1695 Heindon Road
Arcata, California 95521-4573
707-825-2300 Fax: 707-825-2301

Bakersfield Field Office
3801 Pegasus Dr.
Bakersfield, CA 933308
(661) 391-6000 Fax: (661) 391-6040

Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road,
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000 Fax: (760) 252-6099

Bishop Field Office
785 N. Main, Ste. E
Bishop, CA 93514
(760) 872-4881 Fax: (760) 872-2894

Eagle Lake Field Office
2950 Riverside Drive
Susanville, CA 96130
(530) 257-0456 Fax: (530) 257-4831

El Centro Field Office
1661 South Fourth Street
El Centro CA 92243
(760) 337-4400

Folsom Field Office
63 Natoma Street
Folsom, CA 95630
(916) 985-4474 Fax: (916) 985-3259

Hollister Field Office
20 Hamilton Court
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 630-5000 Fax: (831) 630-5055

Needles Field Office
101 W. Spikes Road
Needles, CA 92363
Field Manager - Molly Brady
(760) 326-7000 Fax: (760)326-7099

Palm Springs South Coast Field Office
690 W. Garnet Ave., P.O. Box 581260
North Palm Springs, CA 92258-1260
(760) 251-4800

Redding Field Office
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002
(530) 224-2100 Fax: 530-224-2172

Ridgecrest Field Office
300 S. Richmond Rd.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
(760) 384-5400 Fax: (760) 384-5499

Surprise Field Office
602 Cressler Street
Cedarville, CA 96104
(530) 279-6101

Ukiah Field Office
2550 North State Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
(707) 468-4000 Fax: (707) 468-4027

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Attachment #3: Other government agency permits needed for mining in California.

STATE BOARD DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

Bill Campbell, (916)341-5499, camp@dwq.swrcb.ca.gov
Oscar Balaguer, (916)341-5485, balao@dwq.swrcb.ca.gov
Marla Lafer, (916)341-5486, lafem@dwq.swrcb.ca.gov
Tim Stevens, (916)341-5911, stevt@dwq.swrcb.ca.gov
Fax (916)341-5550

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS

Region 1/North Coast
Scott Gergus, Southern District, (707)576-2685
Fax (707)523-0135

Region 2/San Francisco Bay
Lawrence P. Kolb, (510)622-2300
Fax (510)622-2460

Region 3/Central Coast
Brad Hagemann, (805)549-3697
Fax (805)788-3537

Region 4/Los Angeles
Shirley Birosik, (213)576-6679
Fax (213)576-6640

Region 5/Central Valley
Jeanne Chilcot, Sacramento office, (916)255-3088
Fax (916)225-3015
Fresno office, (209)445-5140
Fax (209)445-5910
Redding office, (916)224-4788
Fax (916)224-4857

Region 6/Lahontan
Tahoe office, (530)542-5400
Fax (530)544-2711
Victorville office, (760)241-7413
Fax (760)241-7308

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Region 7/Colorado River
Adnan Al-Sarabi, (760)776-8943
Fax (760)341-6820

Region 8/Santa Ana
(909)782-4130
Fax (909)781-6288

Region 9/San Diego
Greig Peters, (619)336-2326
Fax (858)571-6972

Water board permits are required if you use water in your mining operation. This could be for sluicing, for use in a mill, or to heap leach ore. Any time water is discharged into the environment it must meet certain criteria and you must have a discharge permit. These authorizations are made only through the Water Boards.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Division of Safety of Dams
1416 Ninth St.
P. O. Box 94236-0001
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001
(916) 445-9248

You will need a permit from the Division of Safety of Dams you want to construct a dam for your mining operation with over 15 acre-feet of storage.

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

Division of Water Rights
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
or,
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812
(916) 341-5250 Fax (916) 341-52523
Water Rights direct number: 916-341-5300

Web site: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/>

If you want to use, appropriate, or divert water from any river, creek, spring or from the bed of a creek or river you will need a permit from the Division of Water Rights, SWRCB.

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ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Drainages into the San Joaquin Valley:

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch
650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 978-2275

Drainages into the Pacific Ocean:

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch
P. O. Box 2711
Los Angeles, CA 90053
(213) 894-5606

If you discharge over 10 cubic feet per day of dredged or fill material in a waterway or wetland or mine in a drainage (even if usually dry), to be in compliance with the Clean Water Act, you must get a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers.

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
SOUTHERN REGION**

2700 M Street, Suite 275
Bakersfield, CA 93301-2373
Tel: (661) 326-6900 FAX: (661) 326-6985
Web site: <http://www.valleyair.org>

You will need a permit from SJVAPCD if you create dust, use internal combustion engines, or otherwise pollute the air.

KERN COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Ted James, AICP, Director
Public Services Building
2700 "M" Street., Suite 100
Bakersfield, CA 93301-2370
Monday - Friday 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M
(661) 862-8600; FAX: (661) 862-8601
E-mail: planning@co.kern.ca.us
Web site: <http://www.co.kern.ca.us/planning/>

You will need building permits from Kern County Planning Department for construct any structure.

KERN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Kern County Hazardous Materials Division
2700 M. St.
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(805) 861-2761

If you plan to store hazardous, flammable or explosive materials (including over 200 cubic feet of compressed gas or 55 gallons of any explosive/flammable liquid) above ground you must get a permit from Hazardous Materials Division. This applies to storage of any product with a material

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safety data sheet.

KERN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Floodplain Management Division
2700 M. St.
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(805) 861-2615

If you want to construct a road or otherwise move over 50 cubic yards of material or build a structure on fill material, obtain a grading permit from the Floodplain Management Division.

CALIFORNIA DIVISION OF MINES AND GEOLOGY
SMARA (Surface Mining and Reclamation Act)
Scott Denny
801 K Street, MS 08-38
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 322-6183 Fax: (916) 324-1396
Web site: http://www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs/dmg_redirect.htm

If you move more than 1,000 cubic yards of material or disturb more than one acre of ground, you need a SMARA permit. These are state permits that are issued through the county planning departments.

KERN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Department of Environmental Health
1800 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93306
(661)868-0301 Fax (661)868-0290
Web site: <http://www.co.kern.ca.us/health>

If you intend to store underground, gasoline, diesel fuel etc; haul or dispose off-site fuels, or store on-site hazardous, flammable or explosive wastes, you will need permits from KCDPHS.

KERN COUNTY SHERIFF
Sheriff Facility Building
Finger-Printing and Gun Permits Department
1415 Truxtun
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(805) 861-7500

If you plan to use explosives, you will need a blasting permit from the Kern County Sheriff. Persons using blasting materials must be licensed by CAL OSHA.

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CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL
Hazardous Materials Section
P. O. Box 942898
Sacramento, CA 94298-3001
(916) 327-3310

To transport explosives on roads you need a permit from CHP.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
1234 E. Shaw Ave.
Fresno, CA 93710
(209) 222-3761

If you want to operate a suction dredge or mine or construct anything that in any way effects any water drainage, you must get a permit from CDFG.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA)
202 W. Rialto Ave. Room 25
San Bernardino, CA 92408
(714) 383-5664

CAL OSHA
6150 Van Nuys Blvd.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
(818) 901-5420

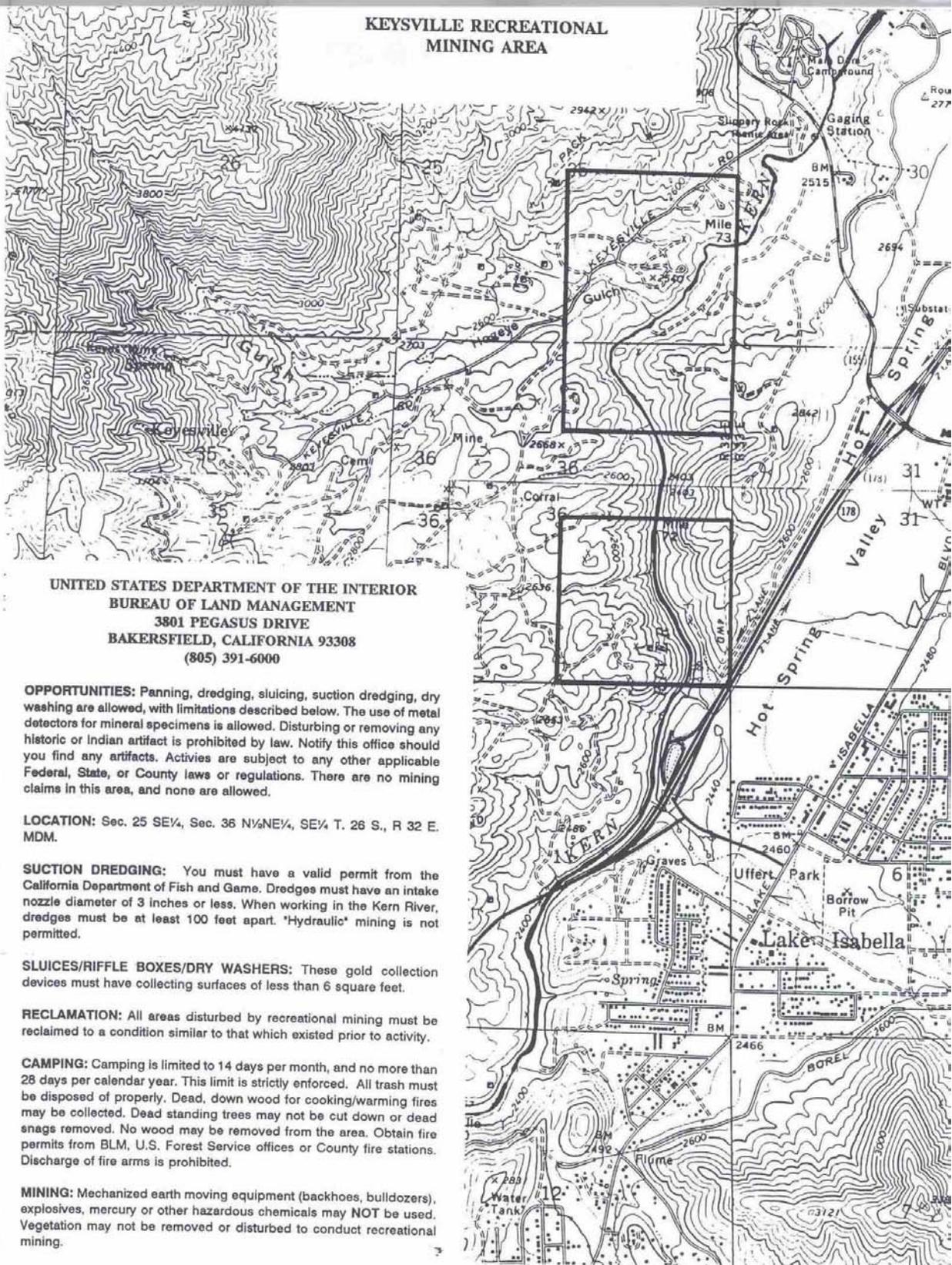
If you want to have an operational mine, you must get permits from these two agencies. They regulate all labor relations and worker safety programs for active mines.

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Attachment #4. Keysville Recreational Area (next page)

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KEYSVILLE RECREATIONAL MINING AREA



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
3801 PEGASUS DRIVE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93308
(805) 391-6000

OPPORTUNITIES: Panning, dredging, sluicing, suction dredging, dry washing are allowed, with limitations described below. The use of metal detectors for mineral specimens is allowed. Disturbing or removing any historic or Indian artifact is prohibited by law. Notify this office should you find any artifacts. Activities are subject to any other applicable Federal, State, or County laws or regulations. There are no mining claims in this area, and none are allowed.

LOCATION: Sec. 25 SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 36 N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ T. 26 S., R 32 E. MDM.

SUCTION DREDGING: You must have a valid permit from the California Department of Fish and Game. Dredges must have an intake nozzle diameter of 3 inches or less. When working in the Kern River, dredges must be at least 100 feet apart. 'Hydraulic' mining is not permitted.

SLUICES/RIFLE BOXES/DRY WASHERS: These gold collection devices must have collecting surfaces of less than 6 square feet.

RECLAMATION: All areas disturbed by recreational mining must be reclaimed to a condition similar to that which existed prior to activity.

CAMPING: Camping is limited to 14 days per month, and no more than 28 days per calendar year. This limit is strictly enforced. All trash must be disposed of properly. Dead, down wood for cooking/warming fires may be collected. Dead standing trees may not be cut down or dead snags removed. No wood may be removed from the area. Obtain fire permits from BLM, U.S. Forest Service offices or County fire stations. Discharge of fire arms is prohibited.

MINING: Mechanized earth moving equipment (backhoes, bulldozers), explosives, mercury or other hazardous chemicals may NOT be used. Vegetation may not be removed or disturbed to conduct recreational mining.

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