

CFMS Field Trips – North Land Claims Seminar

By Dick Pankey, FT-N Committee

Plans are finalized for the Land Claims Seminar next April. Since our last seminar in March 2009 I had been looking for someone to take the lead and plan this next seminar. As of November I hadn't found anyone. On the MLMS Thanksgiving field trip I talked to several of their members; they had a suitable meeting hall, they are centrally located and best of all they seemed interested in hosting a seminar. When I got home I contacted **Bud McMillin**. He said he was interested in helping and would present it to their board the next night. While he was doing that I contacted potential speakers and they said yes. Bud got back to me the following day – the MLMS Board said yes, the hall was available, and **Marion Roberts** would do lunch. We had ourselves a “Land Claims Seminar”!!! This whole process took only 4 days (due to some very fortuitous timing and a lot of people who said “yes”). All of this was accomplished in time to meet the deadline to get the seminar announcement in the January CFMS Newsletter.

The purpose of the seminar is to encourage CFMS societies to file and share claims and to provide them with the information to do so. At the conclusion of our seminar in March of 2009, Gregg Wilkerson from the BLM, recommended that filing and maintaining claims on our rockhounding sites is a good way to establish and preserve our right for access and use. Some CFMS societies already have done this and it is recommended that more societies do it.

Current legislative activity makes it imperative that we establish and file our claims now. The new “Hard Rock Mining and Reclamation Act” was introduced in the House and Senate last July. The proposed “Desert Conservation and Recreation Act” is making its way through the legislative process. We need to act **NOW!!**

The agenda for this seminar will include:

- Why and who should file claims.
- The experiences of current CFMS societies that have claims.
- Liability and insurance issues.
- Use of claims to have and maintain access to rockhounding areas.
- What your society can do.
- How to stake a claim, establish and file a claim with the county and BLM.
- Claim Filing deadlines, Assessment Work, and Intent to Hold
- Where and how to get information about claims and claimed land.
- Answers to your questions.

Seminar speakers will include Dick Pankey, Bud McMillin and Gregg Wilkerson, BLM Claim Specialist. Several CFMS societies currently have claims. I would like some of them to attend this seminar and share their experiences with us.

Gregg Wilkerson is a geologist in the Bakersfield Field Office and performs geologic and hydrologic research and investigations for resource management as Program Team Leader and BLM Certified Mineral Examiner. His duties involve mineral appraisals, land exchanges, conveyances, mineral sales and leases, wilderness withdrawals, mining claim occupancy trespass, surface use determinations, CERCLA removal or remediation, water quality remediation, and hazardous abandoned mine closures.

This seminar will be hosted by the Mother Lode Mineral Society on Saturday, April 24, 2010 in Empire, CA, near Modesto. This is an all day seminar and lunch will be served. The cost of the seminar is \$5.00 (payable at registration), which includes registration, coffee and tea, and a lunch of hot dogs with all of the trimmings, potato salad, chips and a beverage. An announcement flyer with

details, map and directions will be available on the CFMS Web Site - www.cfmsinc.org and on the COOP web site - www.ourfieldtrips.org by February. Or e-mail me at dickpankey@juno.com and I will send you a flyer.

This seminar is for societies who have questions about claims, for societies that want to have a claim, and for all rockhounds that are interested in claims. Please reserve your place at this seminar by notifying Bud McMillin at bud.mcmillin.b7yj@statefarm.com or at 209-527-8000 (work) or 209-524-3494 (home) no later than April 16th. Mark your calendar now for **Saturday, April 24, 2010**, watch for the announcement flier and plan to attend this important, timely and sure to be informative seminar.

(Please help get this seminar information to your members. Editors please reprint in your newsletter; web masters please post on your web site; and field trip leaders please share with your members. Thanks, Dick.)