

# Friends of Mineralogy –Midwest Chapter Field Trip Guidelines

## Announcement and Reservations

A field trip date is not official until the members receive a quarry guide invitation from the field trip chairman via the Google Groups email distribution list. Dates listed in newsletters and other places are proposed and thus are tentative until communicated via email. Attendees may make reservations by responding to instructions in the field trip announcement email. The number of attendees to any given trip may be limited, so individuals must pre-register with the field trip chairperson in advance of the trip. Otherwise, admission may be denied. This also applies to guests. The sign-up period for field trips normally ends at 12 am two days prior to the field trip. Attendees will receive a confirmation email with any trip-specific information in it. Attendees need to read this email carefully!

## Eligibility

Attendees of Chapter-sponsored field trips must be a current member of the Midwest Chapter, with the following exception: at the discretion of the field trip chairperson, a guest may be allowed for special reasons (such as a member of another FM chapter). Requests for guests should be made when the trip is announced. New members may register at any time prior to a trip deadline. Our membership year begins on Jan 1st and existing and previous members must have paid dues prior to trip reservation announcements being broadcast.

Unless it is otherwise noted in the Field Trip Announcement, the minimum age to attend a field trip is 18. Children may not be brought on field trips unless specifically noted in the announcement. Age limits will be at the discretion of the field trip chairperson and quarry personnel.

All field trip attendees, including guests, shall be required to sign a FM Midwest Hold Harmless Agreement prior to participating in a field trip. Safety Training is also required. (see the Training and Trip Safety section below)

## Cancellations

Since there could be a limit on how many members can go on a given field trip, it is important and MANDATORY that you cancel as soon as you know you cannot go so that someone may take your vacant spot. Failure to do so may affect your eligibility for future trips. All cancellations should be made at least 2 days prior to the trip date so there is time to have someone else take the vacant spot. For cancellations after that time, call the numbers listed in the trip confirmation emails.

## Training and Trip Safety

Trip attendees are responsible for being properly trained prior to attending field trips. Mine Safety and Health Administration approved training is available at multiple times and locations each Spring and will be communicated to members.

Individuals should have a copy of their certificate in their possession. This also applies to guests. Those without the certificate may be refused admission by quarry personnel. Note that the certificate must be updated annually in order to be valid. Keeping a copy of your certificate and emergency contact information in a zip-loc bag in your hard-hat is a good practice.

Attendees must sign in at the quarry office and participate in MSHA-required site-specific training given by quarry personnel. Rules delineated by quarry personnel must be followed without question. Note that quarries often require that collectors sign a release absolving the quarry company and personnel of any responsibility for injuries or damage to property.

All collectors must arrive at the appointed quarry location before the time posted in the trip instructions. Failure to arrive on time may void the individual's opportunity to collect that day – at the discretion of the trip leader and co-leader.

- If you are late getting to a quarry DO NOT DRIVE DIRECTLY INTO THE QUARRY without a quarry escort. To do so would be driving onto mine property without site-specific training and in violation of Federal Law. Furthermore, such an action may get the whole chapter barred from future trips to that quarry.

- As stated above, if you are late getting to a property we will know it by your absence during site-specific training. Wait at the office, if the group has already entered the quarry. If our host allows late arrivals to enter the quarry, you cannot do so without their site-specific instruction and your signature on their waiver form.

Collectors are required to provide and use the following Personal Protection Equipment:

- Hard hat: (in good condition without cracks),
- Safety Glasses: (side shields are desirable for optimal protection)
- Boots with industrial safety-toes
- Safety Vest (Reflective vests may become mandatory)
- Long Pants
- Note: All quarries require that vehicle wheels be chocked, and some may require a yellow warning light on the vehicle roof. Read the field trip notice.

Good safety equipment options are:

- Ear protection
- Gloves
- Knee pads
- Tool belts
- Water. Stay hydrated - when you detect you are thirsty, you are already partially dehydrated. Also, water is good for washing off specimens.

Restrictions on power tools and other location specific guidelines will be communicated in field trip announcements, if they are known before the trip. Such requirements and prohibitions vary from quarry to quarry, and may also depend on who our host is for the trip. Do not assume that it is OK to use power tools-ask our host, and comply with their instructions.

All collectors understand that there is some risk inherent in field trips. Neither FM Midwest nor any other member can be held liable for injuries or loss of property. Be aware that damage to your vehicle that takes place in a quarry or other off-road areas may not be covered by your auto insurance. All field trip attendees, including guests, shall be required to sign a FM Midwest Hold Harmless Agreement prior to participating in a field trip; this need only be done once.

Every effort must be made to avoid leaving trash or other items at the collecting site. Take care that metal tools are not left behind. Remember: we are their guests.

It is understood that the field trip chairperson oversees the trip and that his/her instructions are to be followed and only quarry management has higher authority.

It should be understood that not all trips will be productive regarding either quantity or quality of specimens available. This is not within the control of either the field trip chairperson or the quarry personnel.

Attendees must agree to the above guidelines, and to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. We can visit quarries only by permission of quarry owners and if they hear negative comments or observe unsafe or uncourteous behavior, future visits may be denied. It is important to understand that many quarries are now owned by a single company, and if negative comments or inappropriate behavior is encountered by the quarry personnel at one location, the door may be closed at all facilities of the parent company.

## **Violations of Policies and Resultant Penalties**

Disregarding any instruction from the quarry operators or trip leaders is never acceptable and violates one of the lessons taught in our safety training. Safe and respectful field collecting is required of all participants on a FM Midwest fieldtrip. All FM Midwest participants will be monitored by other participants and trip leaders for their behavior and may receive feedback on site from other collectors or the trip leader(s). In addition, potential punishments from the FM Midwest executive committee can result if the reported behaviors violate our safety training, are disrespectful to the quarry operators or jeopardize future trips.

- Any member who sees a potential violation of policy or procedures should inform the involved individual(s) and report the incident to the trip leader or co-leader.

The leader and co-leader have the authority to expel any FM Midwest member from a quarry for cause – late arrival, missing site-specific training, unsafe or disrespectful behavior. Any episode of expulsion must be reported in writing (email) to the executive committee within 24 hours.

Violations less severe than ones that lead to immediate expulsion from a quarry must be forwarded in writing to the FM Midwest executive committee by at least one FM Midwest member who witnessed the offense(s).

- Failure to comply with the FM Midwest or quarry guidelines can result in a range of consequences that includes exclusion from a number of future field trips or expulsion from FM Midwest Chapter.

Penalties will be commensurate to the seriousness of the offense(s).

- Any member so penalized has 30 days to appeal the penalty to the chapter executive committee who will have 5 working days to rule on the appeal.

### **Field trip Organizational Leadership**

FM Midwest Trips will have a leader and a co-leader.

- Co-leader and Leader will have 2-way radios on their person during the entire time in a quarry and check with one another periodically.

- During site-specific training, one or both will remind everyone entering the quarry of the rules – safe collecting as described in our required training, courteous collecting (stay off equipment, away from sumps, highwalls and powerlines, obey quarry rules, do not stop or enter other parts of quarry), and to depart promptly when told to do so.

### **Note:**

**Per our guidelines, previous members cannot participate on field trips until they have paid this year's membership dues, i.e. cannot go on the Danville trip if they pay for membership now, after the invite has gone out. This does not apply to individuals who are new to the Chapter.**