



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES

Brad Avy, State Geologist

August 18, 2016

MEDIA CONTACT

Ali Ryan Hansen, Communications Director

Office: 971-673-0628 Cell: 503-347-5898

ali.hansen@state.or.us

Explore Oregon's rich mining history with new online collections

New online collections of Oregon mining records are opening up the state's rich history.

The records span decades, from the gold rush of the mid-1800s to modern-day aggregate mining operations. The new collections include Baker County Mining Claim Records, mining records held by the Josephine County, Gold Hill, and Woodville historical societies, and a Mining Permit Viewer.

Putting the documents online is part of an ongoing effort by the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) to increase access to the Agency's scientific publications, records and historic collections, says Ali Ryan Hansen, DOGAMI communications director. The project was funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the Oregon State Library.

"So many people will find these mining records interesting and useful," Hansen says. "And now, those historians and genealogists and gold panners and mine operators can look through these books and files wherever they happen to be, instead of travelling to where paper copies are held."

Creating digital copies also preserves irreplaceable information. A flood at the Baker County Courthouse in 2010 put mining claim record books – as well as other priceless historic real estate, tax, and court records – in peril.

Claim books were photographed page-by-page and assembled into PDFs. An 1862 book of mining laws, water rights and claims for the Pioneer District is the oldest book digitized as part of the project, and one of the oldest books of the gold rush era.

"Mining districts were kind of the first local governments in Oregon," says geologist Tom Wiley. "Their laws show us a lot about the lives and livelihoods of early Oregonians."

ABOUT THE COLLECTIONS

Baker County Mining Claim Records: Baker County's booming gold days are captured in more than 50 volumes that include records of claims bought and sold, claim locations, mining district meeting minutes and laws, claim maintenance records and more. Records span from 1862 to 1964. *Find records here:* bit.ly/bakerclaims

Historical Society Records: The project created online access to the mining and mineral records held by the Josephine County Historical Society, the Gold Hill Historical Society, and the Woodville Historical Society. Collections are wide-ranging, and include everything from a 1904 mining map of southern Oregon to Josephine County Sourdough Gazette mining newspapers of the 1960s. Among the holdings are maps, letters, photographs, news articles, publications and more. *Find records here:* bit.ly/societymining

Mining Permit Viewer: The interactive viewer offers easy access to permit files – which include site permits and inspections, maps, photos, and correspondence – for aggregate mining sites, most of which are no longer in operation. The viewer includes records for Baker, Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Crook, Curry and Deschutes counties. Some records are also available for mines in Douglas, Lincoln, Marion, Polk and Washington counties. *Find the viewer here:* bit.ly/MLRRviewer

###