

# Jade State News

Wyoming State Mineral & Gem Society, Inc.

Award-Winning WSMGS Website: [wsmgs.org](http://wsmgs.org)

Volume 2025, Issue # 1

January 2025



## WSMGS OFFICERS

President: Jim Gray

[pres@wsmgs.org](mailto:pres@wsmgs.org)

Vice President: Gary Haptonstall

[vpres@wsmgs.org](mailto:vpres@wsmgs.org)

Secretary: Leane Gray

[sec@wsmgs.org](mailto:sec@wsmgs.org)

Treasurer: Mac Goss

[treas@wsmgs.org](mailto:treas@wsmgs.org)

Historian: Roger McMannis

[hist@wsmgs.org](mailto:hist@wsmgs.org)

Jade State News Editor:

Vacant

[jsn@wsmgs.org](mailto:jsn@wsmgs.org)

RMFMS WY State Director:

Leane Gray

[wydir@wsmgs.org](mailto:wydir@wsmgs.org)

RMFMS WY PLAC Director:

Greg Jones

[placdir@wsmgs.org](mailto:placdir@wsmgs.org)

The WSMGS conducts meetings quarterly and as special events require.

## Message from the President

By Jim Gray

President, WSMGS

Happy New Year, and I hope everyone enjoyed a nice Christmas and are looking forward to an exciting 2025. I have received some interest in the Jade State News Editor position and expect to have that role filled soon so the new person can get started on the April issue. Leane and I have enjoyed being the interim editors and thank everyone who has been helpful by providing direction and submitting news and articles! The submissions of articles, pictures, and Club news are essential to the publication of the quarterly Jade State News. Please keep that coming to [pres@wsmgs.org](mailto:pres@wsmgs.org) and/or [jsn@wsmgs.org](mailto:jsn@wsmgs.org) !

What is coming up in 2025 for the WSMGS Clubs? **The annual gem and mineral show dates are:**

**Cheyenne Mineral & Gem Society, May 17-18**

**Shoshone Rock Club and Cody 59ers, May 30-31**

**Sublette County Rock Hounds, June 13-15**

**Natrona County Rock Hounds, July 12-13**

**NE Wyoming Rock Hounds, October 17-19, the Annual WSMGS Show**



Please send me your show flyers as soon as you can so I can get them posted onto the WSMGS.org website, into the Jade State News, and sent to the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Society for their website and newsletter.

Speaking of shows, I hope you enjoy the article submitted by Sublette County Rock Hounds' member, Nancy Fischer, about her experience with the Houston Gem and Mineral club annual show.

The Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies' (RMFMS) purposes are to "bring about a closer association of the earth science groups in the Rocky Mountain region; to increase and disseminate knowledge about minerals and other geologic materials; to encourage mineral study, collecting, and fashioning as a hobby; to conduct meetings, lectures, displays, and field trips; and to sponsor local organizations interested in similar purposes." (quoted from [rmfms.org](http://rmfms.org), Articles of Incorporation, page 1). The RMFMS is a

(Continued on Page 2)

## Table of Contents

Message from the President .....	<a href="#">Page 1</a>	Getting to Know Jude Wijesena .....	<a href="#">Page 6</a>
Cody 59ers' Christmas Party .....	<a href="#">Page 2</a>	Report from WY PLAC .....	<a href="#">Page 7</a>
In Memory .....	<a href="#">Page 2</a>	SCRH Christmas Potluck .....	<a href="#">Page 8</a>
Rex Young Rock Club, Then & Now .....	<a href="#">Page 3</a>	Wyoming Rock Clubs .....	<a href="#">Page 9</a>
A Rock Show Bird .....	<a href="#">Page 4</a>		
New Traveling Trophy Donated .....	<a href="#">Page 5</a>		

## Message from the President (cont'd from pg 1)

## Cody 59ers Christmas Party

beneficial network of people and resources to help our clubs promote earth sciences, geology, paleontology, lapidary, and related interests. I am now the President of RMFMS and one of my duties is to appoint committee heads in several areas to fill current vacancies. I have detailed those committee openings in my February 2025 Message from the President in the RMF News, which should be coming to your email and is also available on [rmfms.org/newsletter](http://rmfms.org/newsletter). I encourage each of you consider volunteering for one or more of the vacant positions. These committees are another way we can have a positive influence on our hobby, business, and passion!

I am planning on a trip to Hickory, North Carolina in March to participate in the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies' (AFMS) annual convention as the RMFMS President. This will be an exciting opportunity to learn about what is happening across the United States in the world of gem and mineral clubs. Everyone is encouraged to come to the Show hosted by the Catawba club and meet other members and leaders in the nation. More information will be published in the AFMS, RMFMS, and JSN newsletters.

Jim

The Cody 59ers celebrated Christmas and brought the year's activities to a close with a great party on December 14th. Over 40 members participated, featuring a potluck dinner and many fun activities. Door prizes were awarded throughout the evening, and goodie bags were passed out to each member. Nobody left emptyhanded as member Bill Tabacinski passed out a personal gift to each member. Holiday style was on display for the Ugly Sweater Contest and appropriate prizes (dyed Moroccan geodes) were awarded by applause. Most members competed for treasures in very high-spirited Saran Wrap Ball games, followed by a wrapped rock exchange then a gift exchange game, stealing allowed, of course. It was a wonderful evening of camaraderie to celebrate the Holiday Season! Photo of Raven's excitement about her gift of rocks is used with permission.



## In Memory Bill A. Rowan & Terry Kessler

**Long-time members of the Cody 59ers rock club, reported by Greg Jones**

After a long battle with cancer **Bill Rowan** transitioned on Saturday, August 24, 2024.

Bill was a long-time member of the Cody 59ers rock club and a member of the Park county Archaeology club.

Bill loved rock hunting and exploring the natural history of Wyoming with his wife, Teresa, and their two dogs. He was also eager to scout for new areas that the club could go rock hunting. Bill was known for his kindness. Bill had a soft heart for animals and for those in need. He would have given his shirt off his back to help someone. Bill's great sense of humor got him through many tough times. Even through all his battle with cancer he wore a smile. He would encourage those who were struggling. His passing has left a big void and he will be greatly missed by his many friends and family.

**Terry Kessler**, a devoted rockhound and skilled artisan, passed away on October 18, 2024. Born on August 5, 1944, Terry proudly served in the United States Air Force from 1963 to 1969. Following his service, he built a successful career as a master plumber.

Terry shared 57 wonderful years of marriage with his wife, Sharyn. In 1979, they made their home in Cody, Wyoming, where they became members of the Cody 59ers Rock Club. After retiring, Terry and Sharon split their time between Cody and the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. Summers were spent rock hunting in Wyoming, while winters brought opportunities for collecting treasures in Texas and Mexico.

A master lapidarist, Terry transformed agates, petrified wood, and Texas palmwood into beautiful creations such as clocks, bookends, and other unique works of art. His generosity shone through in the many pieces he donated as door prizes or silent auction items for the club.

Terry's warm, kindhearted nature and passion for his craft left a lasting impression on all who knew him. He will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and the Cody 59ers Rock Club community.

[Back to Page 1](#)



# Rex Young Rock Club, Then & Now

## History of Rex Young, the man

Regrettably, not much is known about Rex Young. He lived on 23rd and East A Street in Torrington and his home had a beautiful rock fireplace. He owned or worked at the Keep-U-Neat Cleaners in Torrington.

He and a friend, Russell Durnell, were fishing in Guernsey at the dam and discovered a cave lined with beautiful pink-to-lavender silica. The new rock was named "Youngite" for him.

The rock club bearing his name was organized in 1950.

The Rex Young Rock Club started out as a large group, but as the years passed by and similarly to other clubs, attendance has got smaller. We do, of course, always welcome new members. We try to plan field trips a few times of the year. Just this past July we toured the Sunrise Mine in Hartville and last May we went to the Petrified Gallery Museum in Ogallala, NE.

The club meets monthly on the second Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Torrington Senior Center. We enjoy getting together and showing rocks we have found. For our July meeting, we have a picnic at Roy & Joyce Trowbridge's house in Lingle. For our December meeting, we join with members of the Scottsbluff Rock Club at a local restaurant for Christmas dinner. This year we were very happy with our choice to go to Gering's Monument Golf Course Country Club for the meal! The food was very good, and the restaurant was very pleasing. We look forward to this each year!

Happy New Year to all!

Joyce Trowbridge

Reporter, Rex Young Rock Club



(Above photo from Petrified Gallery Museum in Ogallala, NE)



(Above photo from our annual Christmas dinner with friends and members of the Scottsbluff Rock Club. (Photo taken at Gering's Monument Golf Course Country Club.)



## Sublette County Club Member Is a Rock Show Bird

You are most likely familiar with the concept of snowbirds. I am one, myself. I'm also a rock show bird. I "fly" north in time for the Sublette County Rockhounds Gem & Mineral Show the second weekend in June and head south for the Houston Gem & Mineral Society's Gem, Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show the 2nd weekend in November. This year was no exception.

The 71st HGMS annual show was held at the Humble Civic Center, Nov 8th-11th. It took 190 volunteers over 225 shifts to put on the show. They did everything from set up to tear down including security, taking tickets, silent auction, info booth, selling merchandise, dino dig, fluorescent rock tent, demonstrations, rock/gem/fossil ID, and hospitality. The volunteers included members, friends, spouses and 60 students from local high schools and colleges fulfilling extra credit hours or service club hours.

Friday is usually the craziest day. Fondly known as 'School Daze' we had almost 2000 students come through the show. We have public and private schools come in the morning and home schoolers in the afternoon. Each student gets a grade appropriate, TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills) compliant scavenger hunt. They ask predetermined questions of dealers and club members that pertain to earth science. School attendance is still recovering from COVID.

Saturday is set aside for Scouts (both Boy and Girl). This year 87 scouts earned their geology merit badge.

Our Dino Dig has simplified over the years to a pile of sand with

plenty of treasure. Our formerly elaborate fluorescent rock display has also been modified and now is in a black tent with teaching displays in front.

The Houston Museum of Natural Science, The Houston Geological Society and Stephan F. Austin University also had booths with educational activities.

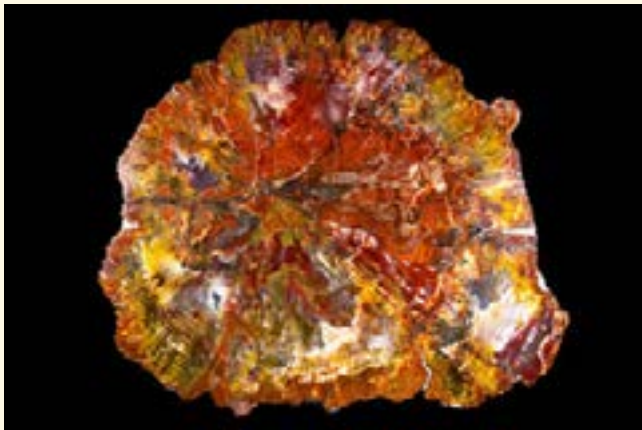
We have a separate area for our youth section that provides information and games.

Over 40 dealers occupy the center area of the convention center. The club takes over the perimeter. Each of the club's sections has an area where they provide displays, information and demonstrations including faceting, casting, capping, silversmithing and beading.

This year only, we included an estate sale of pieces that were donated to the club by a long time member, also a snow bird, from Star Valley, WY. His collection included dino bone and extravagant petrified wood pieces full of color. Our Grand Prize came from his collection.

It's quite a production. I'm proud to be a member of HGMS as you can probably tell. If you happen to be anywhere near SE Texas next November, y'all stop on by. There's something for everyone.

(Article written and submitted by Nancy Fischer, member of both the Wyoming Sublette County Rock Hounds and the Houston Gem & Mineral Society)



Houston Grand Prize donated by Gary Anderson Estate. Photo by Steve Blyskal



Houston show pictures taken by Nancy Fischer. The Paleo Table on the left and the silent auction on the right

[Back to Page 1](#)



# New Traveling Trophy for Judged Showcases

By Greg Jones,, President Cody 59ers Club

A new traveling trophy, awarded to the club with the best showcase as determined by the show judges, was donated by the Cody 59ers Rock Club to the Wyoming State Mineral and Gem Society (WSMGS). The Jade on the trophy was generously donated by Mel Gustin and Rock Solid Lapidary in Riverton. This trophy joins the People's Choice trophy as a prestigious award for club showcases. The picture below was taken by Nella Flurkey showing Greg Jones with the new trophy on the left and the current People's Choice Award trophy on the right. The ribbons pictured are given to the winning cases for the Clubs to keep for their historical records and inclusion in their annual yearbooks.

This year's show theme was "Minerals of Wyoming". Club Showcases were entered for both Judging and People's Choice voting at the annual WSMGS gem and mineral show in Powell. In order from top to bottom, the Club cases were Cody 59ers, Shoshone Rock Club, and Sublette County Rock Hounds. Photos provided by Sharon Hall.



[Back to Page 1](#)



# Jude Wijesena Youth to Adult Club Member

Articles and Photos by Nella Flurkey  
Assistant Editor  
Jade State News

Rock clubs everywhere compete with many other activities for the time and attention of young members. Encouraging parents with children to join rock clubs will keep our clubs growing. To gain insight on how to reach and engage kids in rock clubs, I talked to Jude Wijesena, who is a member of the Cody 59ers Rock Club.

Jude became a member as a young teenager, along with his two younger sisters, when his mother brought them on a club field trip. He attended meetings and field trips through high school, helping with presentations and serving on the club's lapidary committee. Unfortunately, school took most of his time. Since graduating, Jude is a working man, with even less spare time. He gets out to hunt and collect rocks when he can. He was kind enough to take some time to answer my questions about his experience as a young rock club member.

First a few background questions:

## Q:Are you originally from Wyoming?

Jude: No, I was born in Colorado. My family moved to Cody to be closer to our relatives.

## Q:How did you start getting interested in rocks?

Jude: My Grandpa took me out fossil hunting one day and I was hooked!

## Q:Has anyone encouraged or influenced your interest in rocks and collecting rocks?

Jude:Yes, my grandpa, and everybody in the rock club. Peter Larson (Paleo Pete, head of the Black Hills Institute of Geological Research) got me really interested in fossils.

Club related questions:

## Q:When did you join the Cody 59ers? First field trip? Find anything good?

Jude:I joined in 2017, I was 13. The first field trip I was on was a collecting trip to Kane, Wy. I remember finding jasper, quartzite, and some other awesome rocks.

## Q: In what ways have you been active in the 59ers?

Jude:I used to attend meetings and go on field trips. School and my work schedule have kept me from participating very much.

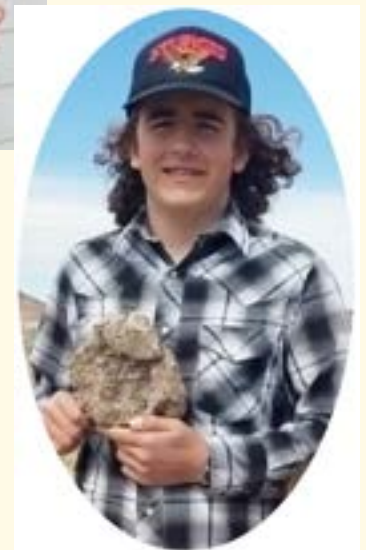
*(I want to add here that Jude has been on our lapidary committee, keeps one of the club tumblers stored when not in use, and often helps answer questions on our Facebook page. He has identified rocks, offered tumbling advice and is generally encouraging to other members.)*

## Q:What do you like best about being in a rock club?

Jude: Going on field trips is always fun and a great way to learn about local geological formations.

## Q:How can rock clubs attract and engage young members?

Jude: Most schools have some sort of outdoor club. If clubs contact schools, I think some of those kids would be interested in learning about rocks.



[Back to Page 1](#)



# Report from WY PLAC Representative, Greg Jones

## Update on The Rock Springs BLM District's Resource Management Plan Revision Article researched and written by RMFMS WY Plac Representative, Greg Jones

The revision of the Rock Springs Bureau of Land Management (BLM) District's Resource Management Plan (RMP) has been contentious from the start. In August 2023, the BLM introduced four proposed alternatives for managing 3.6 million acres of public land in southwestern Wyoming. Among these options, the BLM's preferred "conservation-heavy" alternative, which suggested significant restrictions on land use and public access, quickly ignited widespread debate.

Between the plan's release and the close of the comment period on January 17, 2024, over 35,000 public comments were submitted, with some rockhounds expressing concerns over limited access to rock collecting areas. In response to the feedback, Wyoming's governor appointed a state committee to thoroughly evaluate the proposals. Following this intense scrutiny, the BLM released its final plan in August 2024.

As is typical for BLM RMPs, the final plan represented a compromise, incorporating elements from all four original alternatives. The goal appeared to be accommodating a range of stakeholders, including the general public, state officials, and other agencies that had criticized the earlier draft.

### The Good News for Rockhounds

The preferred alternative had initially proposed that petrified wood collection be limited to individuals with written authorization, restricted to select academic, scientific, or governmental entities. However, the revised RMP permits hobby collection of petrified wood on public lands with these stipulations:

- Quantities are restricted to those outlined in 43 CFR 3622 (The regulations to which we are accustomed).
- Collection is limited to hand tools.
- Excavations must be filled to match surrounding topography.
- No unnecessary or undue degradation may occur.

Commercial collection of petrified wood is still allowed but requires permits, with additional reclamation efforts likely for such activities.

In terms of travel access, earlier proposals would have restricted motorized access to fewer designated roads. The revised plan, however, leaves all existing roads and motorized trails open, granting access to 2,398,839 acres. Additionally, 10,500 acres of sand dunes are designated for off-road vehicle (ORV) use, with the stipulation that vehicles must stay on designated roads and trails elsewhere. However, it's important to note that a travel management plan for the Rock Springs District may follow, potentially imposing new road access restrictions. Rockhounds should monitor these developments closely.

### The Not-So-Good News and Concerns

The plan allows recreational gold panning and casual prospecting in areas not withdrawn from mineral entry. Unfortunately, this means panning is prohibited on approximately 900,204 million acres where there is no mineral entry or the BLM plans to pursue withdrawals. This includes much of the upper Sweetwater River and certain streams near South Pass. Ambiguities persist around what constitutes "casual use" and whether it encompasses rockhounding or mineral collecting. BLM officials have declined to clarify until the plan is finalized.

Another contentious issue is the designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). ACECs are public lands requiring special management to protect important resources, scenic landscapes, or public safety. Currently, the district includes 226,000 acres of ACECs. The BLM's initial preferred alternative proposed increasing this to 1.6 million acres. The final RMP scales this back to 935,000 acres.

The governor's task force failed to reach consensus on supporting or rejecting the ACEC designations. The final RMP states that the BLM will "protect and enhance" ACEC values and allow activities on a case-by-case basis, provided they align with ACEC objectives. While rockhounding is permitted in some ACECs, the case-by-case approach leaves future activities uncertain. Additionally, the BLM intends to pursue mineral withdrawal in most ACECs, further restricting activities. Questions sent to the BLM for clarification remain unanswered.

### Where Are We Now?

The final RMP's attempt to balance preservation, historic land use, and mineral development has faced immediate backlash. Wyoming's governor, Mark Gordon, has submitted formal objections, arguing that the plan could harm the state's economy. Wyoming's congressional delegation, Senators John Barrasso and Cynthia Lummis, along with Representative Harriet Hageman, echoed these concerns, citing potential adverse economic impacts.

(Continued on Page 8)

## Report from WY PLAC (Continued from page 7)

Although the public comment and protest periods have closed, the BLM director, Tracy Stone-Manning, has not yet responded to the Governor Gordon's latest objections. It is anticipated that the final plan will be approved by the director before President-elect Trump takes office in January 2025. News reports suggest that Republicans plan to expand the use of the Congressional Review Act (CRA) early in the next congressional session. This law allows Congress 60 days to revoke new regulations, and the Rock Springs RMP could be among the first targeted for repeal.

### Moving Forward

Regardless of the political outcome, rockhounds must remain vigilant. Changes in land management plans and regulations can significantly affect access to public lands for collecting and other activities. Staying engaged and making our voices heard during these processes is vital to preserving our hobby and ensuring fair access to shared resources.

The ongoing controversy over the Rock Springs RMP underscores the challenges of balancing conservation, public access, and resource development. The resolution of these protests and political challenges will likely set a precedent for the future of federal land management in Wyoming and beyond.

### SUBLETTE COUNTY ROCK HOUNDS' ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK

Jim adjourned the November 16, 2025 meeting and the annual festivities moved to the holiday pajama contest, white elephant gift exchange, drawing for the raffle winners, and conclusion of the silent auction.

Thank you to all who brought an interesting array of silent auction items. Thank you to Jeff Atwood for donating the zebra calcite raffle item, Ed & Linda Trimmer for donating the hand-made recycled sweater mittens raffle item, and Jeff & Charla Goe for donating the rock blanket raffle item: these were won, in order, by Jim Findlay, Tina Schaffer, and Melody Ames.

Two youth dressed in their holiday pajamas, Christine and Shay, the group unanimously agreed they should both win first prize and were each awarded \$25 cash.

Many adults dressed in their cozy finery and the voting was close!

Charla Goe as the Grinch complete with Christmas lights and the dog won the \$25 first prize,

Mike Schaffer sporting a one piece fleece and coordinating hat won the \$15 second prize,

and Tina Schaffer as a green-faced Grinch won the \$10 third place. Thank you everyone who participated! (Photos by Leane Gray).





# WSMGS Rock Clubs

## Riverton Mineral & Gem Society

P.O. Box 1904  
 Riverton, WY 82501  
 rivertonmgs@wsmgs.org  
 www.RivertonMGS.com

Meets 2nd Monday, 6:00 p.m.  
 (September-May.)  
 Senior Center  
 303 E. Lincoln, Riverton

President: ..... Kim Putnam  
 Vice-President: ..... Maggie Gowen  
 Secretary: ..... Aubrey Schmerge  
 Treasurer: ..... Molly Fauth  
 Field Trips..... Steve Shanor

## Cody 59ers Rock Club

P.O. Box 1251  
 Cody WY 82414  
 cody59ers@wsmgs.org  
 www.Cody59ers.com

Meets 4th Thursday, 6:30 p.m.  
 (September-May)  
 Game & Fish building,  
 2 Tilden Trail (off the Belfry Hwy)

President: .....Greg Jones  
 Vice-President: ..... Dave Gillard  
 Treasurer: ..... Audrey Smith  
 Secretary ..... Nella Flurkey  
 Historian: ..... Stan Strike  
 Field Trips.....Greg Jones

## Shoshone Rock Club

P.O. Box 256,  
 Powell, WY 82435  
 shoshonerockclub@wsmgs.org

Meets 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.  
 Eternal Ice,  
 894 Lane 11 1/2, Powell

President: ..... Ilene Olson  
 Vice-President:..... Elyse Lynn  
 Treasurer: ..... Lara Myer  
 Secretary: ..... Jenna Ellinger  
 Reporter: ..... Dorine Strom  
 Field Trips: ..... Gil Cordova

## Cheyenne Mineral & Gem Society

P.O. Box 21412  
 Cheyenne, WY 82003  
 cheyennemgs@wsmgs.org

Meet 2nd Wednesday, 7 p.m.  
 (August-May)  
 IBEW Union Building  
 810 Fremont Street — Cheyenne

Acting President: .....Jan Shively  
 Vice President .....Mike Ryan  
 Treasurer: .....Jan Shively  
 Secretary: ..... Don Harris  
 Field Trip.....Mark Shively

## Sublette County Rock Hounds Club

P.O. Box 1351  
 Big Piney, WY 83113  
 subletterockhounds@wsmgs.org

Meets 3rd Saturday, 1 p.m.  
 (April-December)  
 SW Senior Center,  
 429 E. 1st St., Marbleton  
 Call to confirm: (307) 260-6442

President: ..... Jim Gray  
 Vice-President: .....Mike Schaffer  
 Treasurer: ..... Leane Gray  
 Secretary: ..... Deb Jess  
 Field Trips.....Roger McMannis

## Rex Young Rock Club

112 East 3rd  
 Lingle, WY 82223  
 rexyoungrockclub@wsmgs.org

Meets 2nd Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.  
 Senior Center  
 216 E. 19th Ave., Torrington

President: ..... Kim Nielsen  
 Vice-President: . Sherman Lenhart  
 Treasurer: .....Joyce Trowbridge  
 Secretary: .....Joyce Trowbridge  
 Reporter: .....Joyce Trowbridge  
 Historian: .....Joyce Trowbridge

## Natrona County Rockhounds

P.O. Box 123,  
 Casper, WY 82644  
 natronarockhounds@wsmgs.org

Meets 1st Monday, 7 p.m.  
 (April-December)  
 Shop Open 6-8 p.m. Tue & Fri  
 at Clubhouse, 5211 Rambler, Mills

President: ..... Martin “Mac” Goss  
 Vice-President: ..... Renee Stewart  
 Treasurer: ..... Ken Platte  
 Secretary: ..... Kim Platte

## Converse County Rock Hounds

conversecountyrockhounds@wsmgs.org

Meets 3rd Sunday, 4 p.m.  
 MHCC Conference Room,  
 111 S. 5th St., Douglas

President: ..... Gary Haptonstall  
 Vice President:..... Jo Teal  
 Secretary: .....Hope Vanwey  
 Treasurer: .....Chris Berende  
 Historian.....Marly Borup

## Northeast Wyoming Rockhounds

Gillette WY 82716  
 newyrockhounds@wsmgs.org

Meets odd # months  
 Check email for dates

President: ..... Dennis Brown  
 Vice-President: ..... Bill Palone  
 Treasurer: ..... Open  
 Secretary: ..... Open  
 Field Trips..... Jeff Bennett

