

## **Gold Panning on the White Mountain National Forest**

**Geology:** Gold is associated with a wide variety of rock types (granitic and volcanic rocks in particular) and sediment types (stream gravels and stratified glacial material). So every district has the potential for recreational panning to occur.

**Locations:** Gold panning on the White Mountain National Forest is a recreational activity that occurs mainly on the Pemigewasset and Ammonoosuc Ranger districts. There is a history of gold recovery in the Ammonoosuc River, Tunnel Brook, Little Ammonoosuc River, Baker River, Wild Ammonoosuc River, plus other drainages on the west side.

**Recommended equipment:** A trowel, gold pan or a hand held sluice less than 3 feet is allowed for gold panning.

**Recreational Rock and Mineral Collecting Conditions:** A rock and mineral collecting use permit is being developed. The public will be notified when these permits become available. Surface disturbing rock and mineral collecting activities will require a use permit. Hobby mineral collecting without a use permit is allowed as long as there is no surface disturbance. i.e. picking up a rock. Surface disturbance is defined as digging, excavating, prying, destroying, or similar activity that results in the removal, displacement, or destruction of rocks, minerals, soil, or vegetation. Surface disturbing rock and mineral collection activities must follow the Forest Plan standards and guidelines

### **General Standards and Guidelines:**

- Only hand tools are permitted. The use of power, mechanized equipment, or explosives for recreational collecting of geologic resources, including gold recovery activities is prohibited. This includes sluice boxes (larger than 3 feet), rocker boxes and dredges.
- Gold panning for recreational purposes is allowed within active stream channels, provided due care is taken to protect water quality and aquatic habitat. Small trowels or similar digging tools for scooping sediment into the pan are allowed.
- Where streams are disturbed for recreational mineral collecting, such as gold panning, turbidity levels must not exceed water quality standards needed to maintain “outstanding resource waters” as defined by the water quality regulations of New Hampshire and Maine.
- No surface disturbance is allowed within developed recreation areas immediately adjacent to roads, trails, other facilities, stream banks, or in other areas where such activity may adversely affect other resources or activities.