

# OREGON DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES

Vicki S. McConnell, State Geologist

*The mission of the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries is to provide earth science information and regulation to make Oregon safe and prosperous.*

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## Outstanding and rare rocks and minerals now on display in Josephine County

**Portland, Oregon:** Display cases with crystals, meteorites, and rare stones and gems now line the hallways in the basement of the Josephine County Courthouse. Gold and silver ore samples collected in Josephine County are also part of the new displays that are on loan to the County from the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI).

State Geologist Vicki McConnell and Josephine County Commissioners will hold a dedication event, Wednesday, January 20th at 9:00 AM at the Josephine County Courthouse.

Budget cuts to the 2009-2011 biennial budget for DOGAMI resulted in closing the Grants Pass field office in August, 2009. There was great concern from many local people and organizations that this outstanding collection of rocks and minerals displayed at the DOGAMI field office, as well as valuable geologic documents and rare maps, would no longer be accessible to citizens in Josephine County.

State Geologist McConnell worked with county officials, notably County Commissioner Dave Toler, to see that these important materials could continue to a part of Josephine County's heritage. The Rogue Gem and Geology Club was also instrumental in helping catalog, transfer, and set up the displays at the County Courthouse.

"The placement of the rock and gem displays in the Josephine County Courthouse and the retention of geologic records in our surveyor's office has been a wonderful achievement for the citizens of Josephine County," said Commissioner Toler. "It's a shining example of how state and local government can work together to truly benefit our citizens."

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**Thundereggs, Oregon's state rock, and many other beautiful rocks and minerals are now on display at the Josephine County Courthouse. The rocks and minerals are on loan from the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries.**

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“Our field office in Grants Pass had been part of that community since 1937, when our agency began”, said McConnell. “While it has been disheartening to close our field office, we’re happy the rocks and minerals have a new home where even more people can enjoy them.”

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries is an independent agency of the State, and has a broad responsibility in developing a geologic understanding of natural hazards. We then make this information available to communities and individuals to help reduce the risks from earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, floods and volcanic eruptions. We assist in the formulation of state policy where an understanding of geologic materials, geologic resources, processes, and hazards are key to decision-making. The Department is also the lead state regulatory agency for mining, oil, gas and geothermal exploration, production and reclamation.

Learn more about Oregon’s geology by going online at:

<http://www.oregongeology.org>

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