

***Research Sampling of Collections****Virgil W. Lueth**New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources – Mineral Museum*

To fully utilize the research potential of the museum collections, it may be necessary to subject samples of original material to analysis. Because sampling is destructive and permanently alters the integrity of the specimen, it should be strictly regulated.

All sampling should be approved in writing by the curator-in-charge prior to sampling.

Collection records should document all sampling, location taken, and information obtained. Essentially a chain of custody should be maintained.

Samples and the information they contain should remain the property of the collection and the facility should be credited at all times.

Requests for sampling should fulfill the following requirements:

- a. The information needed and/or sample does not already exist in the collection files.
- b. There is a justifiable need to remove a sample for analysis and the information needed could not be obtained through non-destructive means.
- c. The project has merit and a reasonable chance of success and completion.
- d. The technique of sampling, the amount of material to be removed, and the location on the specimen must produce as little damage as possible.
- e. The method of analysis, laboratory, and proposed staff should be disclosed.
- f. The information obtained from the analysis should be disseminated in a way that benefits the research and/or public community at large.
- g. Samples should be returned to the collection for other analytical uses.
- h. A report on the research analysis should be sent to the collection facility for archival purposes to prevent repetitive sampling for similar analysis.

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***The Mission of the Society of Mineral Museum Professionals is:***

*To foster recognition of mineral science collections as essential scientific, educational and cultural resources.*

*To promote support for growth, maintenance and use of collections and exhibits.*

*To advance museum practice through cooperation in the development, review and dissemination of information.*