



Mineral Titles

Information Update

No. 2 – Recreational Hand Panning for Placer Minerals

Revision Date: Feb 6, 2018

The *Mineral Tenure Act* allows individuals who do not hold a Free Miners Certificate (FMC) to hand pan for placer minerals in a watercourse as a recreational activity.

Hand panning means to wash mineralized earth and gravel by agitation in a hand held pan so as to separate and recover placer minerals having the greatest specific gravity. Recreational hand panning is strictly limited to the following tools: hand pan and shovel. Recreational hand panning does not include the use of a metal detector. Use of a metal detector to explore for mineral or placer minerals is considered a prospecting activity. [Section 11\(1\)](#) of the *Mineral Tenure Act* requires that only a free miner or an agent of a free miner may enter mineral lands to explore for minerals or placer minerals, which includes prospecting for minerals or placer minerals with a metal detector. The use of sluice or shaker boxes, suction dredges, and other mechanical devices are not permitted.

The use of water for recreational hand panning and hand placer mining is considered to be 'prospecting for a mineral as defined in section 1 of the Water Sustainability Act. A person may use unrecorded water without an authorization as indicated in section 6(3) of the Water Sustainability Act (<http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/14015#section6>).

Hand panning must **not** be carried out:

1. On a valid mineral or placer title unless the person has permission from the recorded holder of the mineral or placer title (Section 9(2) of the *Mineral Tenure Act*);
2. Within a park, conservancy, ecological reserve, or protected area, unless permission from the park warden or administrative agency responsible for the park is first obtained;
3. On a Provincial heritage site as defined in Section 1 of the *Heritage Conservation Act*;
4. On an Indian Reservation or Treaty Settlement Lands, unless permission is first obtained from the First Nation(s);
5. On private property without the owner's permission.

The Ministry has created a number of recreational panning reserves around the Province that are open to the general public to use for recreational hand panning:

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/mineral-exploration-mining/mineral-titles/reserves/recreational-panning-reserves>

For further information, please contact Mineral Titles.