GEOETHICS IN THE FIELD: INTEGRATING ETHICAL PRINCIPLES INTO GEOSCIENCE FIELDWORK PRACTICES

Values – Integrity – Perception
UNETHICAL AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR BY PROFESSIONAL GEO SCIENTISTS ON PUBLIC LANDS

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VALUES

What are the competing values for the lands on which you collect?
VALUES

What are the competing values for the lands on which you collect?

How important is your research question?

How will your work impact the environment around you?
VALUES

How does your fieldwork integrate with other uses of the land?
Questions?
INTEGRITY

What values do you hold important?

How do you represent yourself and your institution?

What field methods will you use?

How will you report and preserve your results?

What will happen to your collections?
JUAB COUNTY — Police are investigating after rock art was vandalized in a canyon near Levan.

The vandalism occurred sometime in August in a tributary of Chicken Creek Canyon, about 10 miles southeast of Levan, according to Manti-La Sal National Forest Heritage Program Leader Charmaine Thompson. The area has a small collection of pictographs — painted figures — on exposed round rocks on the conglomerate canyon wall.

Lindon resident Rex Daley said he first saw the rock art around 40 years ago when his father-in-law showed it to him. Daley was in the area bidding for a construction job in Chicken Creek Canyon when he decided to go look at the beautiful rock art. When he discovered the graffiti, Daley quickly reported it to Forest Service officials.

The rock wall shows the names of several individuals and "XXXX University," leading local officials to believe it occurred during the school's annual geology field camp in the area.
There is a reasonable expectation that once started an excavation will be brought to an appropriate close.
Violation: Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2009

A very large volume of fossil-rich rock was excavated without proper authorization at the fossil plant locality.

Restoration and Repair: $40,000
Violation: Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979

_Destruction of an archaeological site by a University geology department that was studying the flow of magma (paleomag)._ 

Restoration and Repair: $20,000
Violation: Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979

The site has significant scientific and archaeological value as well as being of great cultural importance to the Paiute and Shoshone Indians who inhabit the area today and whose ancestors used the site.

Restoration and Repair: $25,000
STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

This is where best (or worst) practice starts

Stop smacking the rocks!

Pay attention to your professor

Respect the outcrop
Questions?
PERCEPTION

Who do you think you are?

How do others see you?

How do you represent your profession?

What are you teaching others by your example?
The deal would have to be that the material would be on “permanent loan” to us and kept at (my university) till we retire, die, go senile or whatever.

- BLM permittee to designated repository, 2004

Our agreement with (the museum) was the specimens stayed here until I drop dead or decide to move on.

- BLM permittee to designated repository, 2009
Back off! I’m a scientist!!!
PERCEPTION

Who do you think you are?

IT'S NOT TRESPASSING IF YOU'RE A GEOLOGIST
"Why would a geology student do something like that? … We have some outside students who should know better, geology students, and they deface it."

Public response to rock art vandalism by geology field school
Even under permit, we would have requested that the locality not be completely ‘mined out’ just for this purpose.
PERCEPTION

How do you represent your profession?

State employee ran private consulting business. Used state facilities...
PERCEPTION

What are you teaching others by your example?

Texas students charged in Utah dinosaur fossil theft

By BRIAN MAFFLY | The Salt Lake Tribune
First Published Apr 21 2016 06:51PM

...counselor, students plead guilty...
INTRODUCTION

1. This is an action to:

   a. obtain immediate possession of and a declaration of ownership to thousands of vertebrate and invertebrate nonrenewable specimens of fossils (hereafter the fossils) that have been excavated and removed from Federal land without authorization;
Code for Geological Fieldwork
- Obey the law
- Seek permission
- Don’t interfere with machinery
- Don’t litter
- Avoid undue disturbance
- Be aware of tides and local hazards
- Be safe in remote areas

Collecting and field parties
- Students should observe, not hammer indiscriminately
- Keep collecting to the minimum amount needed
- For teaching use replicas when possible
- Never collect from walls or buildings

Societies, Schools, and Universities

Health and Safety

Note to Landowners

Visiting Quarries

Research Workers
- No researcher has the right to ‘dig out’ any site
- Excavations should be backfilled
- Don’t disfigure rock surfaces
- Ensure that collections and notebooks become available by depositing in an appropriate institution
- Take care that publication of locations does not lead to the destruction of vulnerable exposures

Code for Coring
- Take cores from the least exposed faces
- Take only the minimum number of cores
- Plug the holes
- Respect the feelings of other geologists

http://www.amlwcchistory.co.uk/parys/geology%20field%20work%20code.pdf
WHAT CAN I DO?

What is the impact of your work on the environment?
WHAT CAN I DO?

Will the benefits of your work outweigh the impact?
WHAT CAN I DO?

Respect the values of other users of the land
GEOETHICS IN THE FIELD

Values – Integrity – Perception