

**TUMBLER RIDGE MUSEUM FOUNDATION
(TRMF)**

and

**PEACE REGION
PALAEOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE
(PRPRC)**

Palaeontology Code of Ethics

Introduction and premises:

The Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation (TRMF) was formed in 2001.

Its goals include highlighting the unique palaeontological features of the area, maintaining a suitable repository, providing an organization through which those interested in palaeontology may meet and exchange information, stimulating research, and developing the highest possible standards of policies, procedures and ethics.

TRMF supports the development of four main themes

- 1) Palaeontology
- 2) Coal, the creation of Tumbler Ridge and recent history
- 3) Pioneer history and First Nations History
- 4) Other natural history e.g. waterfalls, wildlife

The Peace Region Palaeontology Research Centre (PRPRC) was formed by the TRMF to promote the protection, discovery, collection, scientific study and display of regional and local palaeontological resources, and to develop the educational opportunities and partnerships that result.

The PRPRC's palaeontologists and scientific advisors have made it into a local and regional centre of excellence, following the highest possible scientific and ethical standards.

Palaeontological study is in its infancy in the Tumbler Ridge area, with the probability of further significant new scientific discoveries. Significant damage can be done to sites and fossils by unsupervised collecting, or by making replicas of fossils including ichnofossils (trace fossils such as dinosaur footprints) regardless of the intentions behind these activities. It is often very difficult to immediately recognize the importance of a fossil specimen.

The fossil record of the region is a priceless resource which should be properly collected, accessioned, catalogued, researched and, where suitable, exhibited, for the benefit of all. This should be achieved through public institutions rather than through private collections.

TRMF is a registered non-profit society and charitable organization, actively and continuously engaged in fundraising so as to maintain its programs. Its Souvenir Committee inventively develops and promotes sales items to help with fundraising.

Code of Ethics for TRMF Members:

TRMF requires “right of first refusal” for local (Tumbler Ridge area) and regional (Peace Region) fossil specimens from its members. Information on new fossil discoveries is thus brought to the attention of the TRMF palaeontologists, who will judge if the specimen is important enough to be accessioned into the PRPRC collections.

A new fossil or fossil site discovery is to be documented via photographs and precise map location, and brought to the attention of the TRMF palaeontologists, without being removed or disturbed in any way until the site is assessed by legitimate palaeontologists recognized by the TRMF. The location of the find should be kept confidential.

Should TRMF not wish to accession the specimen(s) for its collections, and the member wishes to maintain a private collection, the member must determine the status of the land, apply for appropriate permission as needed, and understand and comply with existing legislation and regulations pertaining to collection of fossils in BC. The site should be disturbed as little as possible, and overcollection at any one site should be avoided. If requested by TRMF, the member is to document the relevant geological and stratigraphical data, and catalogue the specimen appropriately. TRMF members wishing to maintain private palaeontological collections are encouraged to contribute a copy to the TRMF of a written list of specimens in their collections.

Permission is to be obtained from the TRMF palaeontologists regarding the making of casts or replicas of fossils, including ichnofossils.

Members with a serious interest in palaeontology may request to partake in a TRMF field expedition, or may request approval to collect specimens for the PRPRC’s collections, but must agree to follow collection and documentation procedures and conditions which will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

No TRMF Board Member or Officer shall be remunerated for his/her palaeontological services, or profit from entrepreneurial activities with a Tumbler Ridge palaeontological theme. TRMF members may engage in such entrepreneurial activities, but will respect copyright of items and designs developed by the TRMF Souvenir Committee, and not attempt to duplicate these items for profit.

Members who fail to adhere to these ethics may have their membership in the TRMF revoked.

Requests for non-members:

TRMF requests that non-members comply with the same Code of Ethics in the Peace Region that pertains to members.

TRMF requests that regional museums and other organizations both public and private support the work of the PRPRC. In turn the important fossil specimens of the region, once accessioned through the PRPRC, can be used to enhance local palaeontology exhibits throughout the region.