How to Stake and File a Mining Claim in Wyoming

To stake and file a mining claim in Wyoming, you make a discovery, post a notice where you found it, mark the boundaries, record a location certificate with the county clerk, and file with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Wyoming gives you 90 days from the day of your discovery to record with the county, and BLM gives you 90 days from the day you post the notice. A new lode claim costs $274 in BLM fees, plus $12 for a one-page certificate at the county.

Wyoming counts from your discovery, not from your posting, so post the notice the day you find something. Wyoming also requires a sworn statement with the county clerk each year, within 60 days after you pay BLM's yearly fee or do the work.

Last checked November 10, 2026. This is a plain-words summary of Wyoming and federal law, not legal advice. Fees and rules change, so confirm dates and costs with your county clerk or BLM before you rely on them. The newest version of our Wyoming staking guide is at goldmapsonline.com/how-to-stake-a-mining-claim-in-wyoming.html. Check it before you file, since fees and rules can change after you download your maps.

The steps at a glance

Step	Where	Deadline	Cost
1. Post your notice	At your discovery	The day you find it; this starts the clock	No fee
2. Mark the boundaries	On the claim	Before you record	Your posts or stones
3. Record a location certificate	County clerk	90 days after discovery	$12 for one page, $3 for each added page
4. File with BLM	Online in MLRS, or BLM in Cheyenne	90 days after posting	$274 for a lode claim
Keep it each year	BLM	September 1	$200 per lode claim or per 20 acres of placer
Record each year	County clerk	60 days after you pay or do the work	$12 for one page, plus $1 per claim past five

Start with your map

A filled closed box on your Wyoming map means that section has no active claims today, which makes it a good place to start looking. Its pop-up gives you what the paperwork asks for: the county, the township, range and section, and the BLM code.

One example from the November 2026 map is a closed placer box in Fremont County at T27N R100W Sec 18, Sixth Principal Meridian, with the BLM code 06 0270N 1000W 018. A box covers a section of about 640 acres and doesn't show a claim's exact edges, so the map tells you where to look and your own checks tell you whether you can stake there.

Check the ground first

1. **Look it up in BLM's records.** Go to reports.blm.gov/reports/MLRS, choose Mining Claims – Geographic Report, enter the BLM code, and tick Active and Filed. Our step-by-step MLRS guide walks through each screen.
2. **Check that the land is open to mining.** BLM's Master Title Plats, on the GLO Records website, show what's open. You can't stake in national parks, national monuments, wilderness areas, Indian reservations or military land, and private land is off limits.
3. **Watch for state land and split estate.** Federal mining claims don't apply on Wyoming state trust land, where minerals take a lease from the Office of State Lands and Investments. On some ranch land, a rancher owns the surface but the government kept the minerals. There, BLM's Wyoming packet says you must file a notice of intent to locate with BLM and the surface owner before you go on the land to stake.
4. **Walk the ground.** A new claim can take up to 90 days to reach BLM's records, so look for fresh posts and notices before you put up your own.
5. **Make a discovery.** Every claim needs a discovery of a valuable mineral. BLM's test is whether a sensible person would spend more time and money trying to develop a mine there, and recording a claim and paying the fees won't make it valid without one.

Lode or placer

A lode claim covers gold in solid rock, like a quartz vein, and can be up to 1,500 feet long and 600 feet wide. A placer claim covers loose gold in sand and gravel, and can be 20 acres per person, up to 160 acres for a group of eight or more. The notice, the markers and the certificate differ, so pick the type that fits what you found.

Step 1: Post your notice

Wyoming's law says no lode claim gives you any rights until you find mineral-bearing rock in place on it, so make your discovery first. Wyoming counts its county deadline from the day of discovery, while BLM counts its deadline from the day you post your notice, which is your location date. Post the notice the same day you make the discovery, so both clocks start together.

Post it at the point of discovery, on the surface, where it's easy to see. BLM's Wyoming packet says to post it there for both kinds of claim. The notice has to give all of these:

- The name of the claim
- The name of each locator, and for a lode, the name of the person who made the discovery
- The date of the discovery
- **Placer:** the number of feet or acres you claim, in plain painted, printed or written letters, fixed securely so it stays put

Step 2: Mark the boundaries

Wyoming's law says to mark the boundaries before you record your certificate. It doesn't give a number of days, so mark them right away, well inside your 90 days.

- **Lode claim:** six solid stone monuments or posts, one at each corner and one at the center of each side line. Sink them in the ground, and hew or mark the side that faces the claim. If a spot is too steep or dangerous, put the marker at the nearest safe point and mark it to show where it belongs.
- **Placer claim:** a solid post or stone monument at each corner of the claim.

The law gives no size for the markers, so make them big and solid enough to find and follow. BLM doesn't allow perforated or uncapped pipe as markers, because of wildlife deaths.

Step 3: Record with the county clerk

Within 90 days of your discovery, record a location certificate with the clerk in the county where the claim sits. This is a separate paper from the notice you posted. Each certificate can hold only one claim, and Wyoming's law says a lode certificate that leaves out anything below is void. It has to give all of these:

- The name of the claim, and for a placer, the words placer claim
- The name of each locator and the date of location
- **Lode:** the length of the claim, the general direction of the vein as far as you know it, and how much surface ground you claim
- **Placer:** the number of feet or acres you claim
- A description tied to a natural or fixed object that identifies the claim beyond question. For a lode on surveyed land, a section or quarter section corner works too

Wyoming doesn't ask for a map with the certificate. State law says the clerk records only originally signed papers, so sign the copy you record in ink rather than sending a photocopy. Several clerks, including Fremont's and Sweetwater's, also want papers signed in front of a notary. No Wyoming law clearly says a location certificate needs one, so sign it in front of a notary to be safe.

Wyoming's law sets no page rules, but many clerks post their own. To meet them all, use 8.5 by 11 inch paper with type of at least 12 point. Leave a 2-inch blank margin at the top of the first page and 1 inch on the other sides, put a title at the top, like Location Certificate, and print your name under your signature. Put your mailing address on the first page, so the clerk can send it back to you.

State law sets the fee at $12 for the first page and $3 for each added page, the same in every county. The clerk won't record anything until it's paid, so send the fee with a mailed certificate, and Carbon County asks for a stamped return envelope too. The clerk dates a paper by the day and time it arrives, not the day you mail it, so mail it well before day 90.

If you find a mistake in your certificate later, Wyoming's law lets you file an additional location certificate to fix it, as long as it doesn't take away rights someone else already has.

Step 4: File with BLM

BLM needs its own filing by the 90th day after you post the notice, and it advises recording with the county first. Send BLM a copy of the recorded certificate, a map of the claim and the fees. You can file online in MLRS at mlrs.blm.gov with a login.gov account, or by mail or in person at BLM's Wyoming State Office in Cheyenne.

BLM's copy needs the township, range, section and quarter section, and the map can be a sketch tied to a natural object or permanent monument, as long as BLM could find the claim on the ground. Claims you file together can share one map.

Claim	Fees	Total
Lode	$25 + $49 + $200	$274
Placer, up to 20 acres	$25 + $49 + $200	$274
Placer, 21 to 40 acres	$25 + $49 + $400	$474

The three fees are the processing fee, the location fee and the first maintenance fee, for claims located on or after September 1, 2026. Each added 20 acres of placer, or part of 20 acres, adds $200.

A claim that isn't recorded with BLM and the county by the 90th day is abandoned and void under federal law, even if the ground is good. BLM says it refunds the location and maintenance fees in that case, after the appeal period.

Re-staking a closed claim

Re-staking a closed claim means making a brand-new claim, and none of the old owner's rights carry over. All four steps apply, and Wyoming doesn't require any digging for it. Check the old claim's status in BLM's records before you start.

For a lode claim, Wyoming's law says to mark the boundaries the same way as for a new claim. You can put up new markers or use the old ones, but replace any that are gone or knocked down, and set a new location stake. The law doesn't describe the stake, so set a solid post at your discovery and fix your notice to it. Your certificate can say the ground is located as an abandoned claim, though the law doesn't require it.

The law has no re-staking rule for placer claims, so treat one as a new claim and mark every corner yourself.

Keeping your claim each year

On or before September 1 each year, pay BLM $200 per lode claim, or $200 for each 20 acres of a placer claim, or the claim is forfeited. If you stake before September 1 but file with BLM after it, you'll owe two maintenance fees at once, one for each year, unless you qualify for the small miner waiver and file it when you record the claim.

Wyoming also requires a sworn statement, called an affidavit, recorded with the county clerk within 60 days after you pay BLM's fee or finish the yearly work, so paying or working early moves that date earlier. It has to say that the work was done or the fee was paid, and someone who knows the facts has to make it. The law doesn't say whether the first fee you pay with a new claim counts, so to be safe, record one within 60 days of that payment too.

Sign it in front of a notary, since it's a sworn statement. The fee is $12 for the first page and $3 for each added page, plus $1 for each claim name past five.

With 10 or fewer claims nationwide, you can do at least $100 of work on each claim instead of paying. File the free waiver form with BLM by September 1, on paper because it can't be filed online, then file an affidavit of the work with BLM by December 30 at $15 per claim. The Wyoming county affidavit is still due within 60 days after you do the work, and BLM's Wyoming packet says to record the waiver form with the county too.

A claim doesn't give you a free hand on the surface. Anything beyond casual use, which means little or no ground disturbance, can need a notice or a plan of operations, so talk to the local BLM field office or Forest Service ranger district first. If you dig a pit or shaft, Wyoming's law says to cover it or fence it so livestock can't fall in.

Wyoming's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regulates digging with a dozer or other motorized equipment, and suction dredges with an intake over 3 inches or a motor over 10 horsepower. If your work goes

beyond small, now-and-then recreational digging, you need its License to Explore. Only hand panning is allowed in Class 1 streams, including the Sweetwater River.

Who to ask

- **BLM Wyoming State Office:** Call 307-775-6256. The office is at 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, WY 82009, open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday. Call or email ahead if you plan to visit, since people with appointments are helped first.
- **Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments:** Call 307-777-6630 about mineral leases on state trust land, where federal claims don't apply.
- **Wyoming DEQ, Land Quality Division:** Call 307-777-7937 about a License to Explore, suction dredges and Class 1 streams, or see DEQ's exploration and prospecting page.

Where these rules come from

- Wyoming Statutes Title 30, Chapter 1: discovery, notices, markers, location certificates, re-staking and the yearly affidavit
- Wyoming Statutes 18-3-402 and 34-1-113 and 34-1-119: recording rules, notaries and county fees
- BLM's Wyoming State Office, its mining claim packet and mining claim fees
- Wyoming DEQ, Exploration and Prospecting: Licenses to Explore, suction dredges and Class 1 streams
- 43 U.S.C. 1744 and 30 U.S.C. 28f: the yearly filing and the maintenance fee

Wyoming county clerks

In Wyoming the county clerk records mining claims, and a claim is recorded in the county where the ground is. Call before you mail anything, since offices move and hours change.

County	Clerk's address	Phone
Albany	525 Grand Avenue, Suite 202, Laramie, WY 82070	307-721-2541
Big Horn	420 W. C Street, Basin, WY 82410 Mail: P.O. Box 31, Basin, WY 82410	307-568-2357
Campbell	500 S. Gillette Ave, Suite 1600, Gillette, WY 82716	307-682-7285
Carbon	215 W. Buffalo St., Rawlins, WY 82301 Mail: P.O. Box 6, Rawlins, WY 82301	307-328-2668
Converse	107 N 5th Street, Suite 114, Douglas, WY 82633	307-358-2244
Crook	309 Cleveland Street, Sundance, WY 82729 Mail: PO Box 37, Sundance, WY 82729	307-283-1323
Fremont	450 N. 2nd St., Rm 220, Lander, WY 82520	307-332-2405
Goshen	2125 East A Street, Suite 120, Torrington, WY 82240 Mail: P.O. Box 160, Torrington, WY 82240	307-532-4051, ext. 6402
Hot Springs	415 Arapahoe, Thermopolis, WY 82443	307-864-3515
Johnson	76 N Main Street, Buffalo, WY 82834	307-684-7272
Laramie	309 W 20th St, Suite 1600, Cheyenne, WY 82001 Mail: P.O. Box 608, Cheyenne, WY 82003	307-633-4350
Lincoln	925 Sage Ave., Suite 101, Kemmerer, WY 83101	307-877-9056
Natrona	200 North Center Street, Room 154, Casper, WY 82601-0863	307-235-9217

County	Clerk's address	Phone
Niobrara	424 South Elm Street, Lusk, WY 82225 Mail: P.O. Box 420, Lusk, WY 82225	307-334-2211
Park	1002 Sheridan Ave., Cody, WY 82414	307-527-8600
Platte	800 9th Street, Wheatland, WY 82201 Mail: PO Box 728, Wheatland, WY 82201	307-322-2315
Sheridan	224 S. Main St., Suite B-2, Sheridan, WY 82801	307-674-2500
Sublette	21 S. Tyler, Pinedale, WY 82941 Mail: P.O. Box 250, Pinedale, WY 82941	307-367-4372
Sweetwater	80 W. Flaming Gorge Way, Suite 150, Green River, WY 82935	307-872-3732
Teton	200 S Willow Street, Jackson, WY 83001 Mail: P.O. Box 1727, Jackson, WY 83001-1727	307-733-4430
Uinta	225 9th Street, Evanston, WY 82930-3473 Mail: P.O. Box 810, Evanston, WY 82931-0810	307-783-0306
Washakie	1001 Big Horn Avenue, Worland, WY 82401 Mail: P.O. Box 260, Worland, WY 82401	307-347-3131
Weston	1 West Main Street, Newcastle, WY 82701	307-746-4744