



Lolo Pass Smoky Quartz Collecting: The first thing to note is that the USFS will not help you at all so just buy a copy of the Lolo National Forest West Half Map. Don't waste your time telling them you want to collect crystals. They will try and discourage you. From Missoula it will take you about 1-1.5 hrs to the collecting area. Now note that you can collect and find quartz on the Idaho and Montana sides since Lolo Pass is on the border. Go to Lolo Pass and turn right on NF595 directly across from the Packer Meadows Road (East) and unmarked (West) to Granite Pass. Stay on the main roads all the way to Granite Pass. As you reach the pass stop and look behind you. There is a road off to the east/northeast. Follow this road for about 2-3 miles to a quite obvious parking area with large rocks to stop vehicle traffic. Park here. From here you can go north, south and/or east and likely hit smoky quartz. The main "war zone" is to the north and you get there by taking a trail from the parking lot thru the forest. It will take about 5-10 minutes to walk to the area. The quartz is in a layer of clay/dirt from 12-36 inches below the surface. Recommended tools are a pick, small shovel, long shank screwdriver, etc... Some people have apparently dug quite large holes without any concern for their lives and have payed the price, even recently. Don't put your body in jeopardy for a few quartz crystals. Use common sense. Check for any regulatory changes. There are also private claims shown on the map and I understand there are areas outside of them that have been collected successfully. There are also many FS roads with locked gates.