

## **State Metal Detecting Association Formation**

By Mike Smith

States that have at least five metal detecting clubs should consider establishing a state association. The state organization can offer a centralized voice across the state with legislators, retailers, clubs and the individual detectorist. The state association is an important link between clubs, independents and the 2 national associations. A key component of a state association is overseeing the health of the state's metal detecting environment and to be a watch dog on legislation.

There is a severe lack of state metal detecting associations; these associations could provide a sufficient advantage in making metal detecting lawful. State association can be the cohesive glue that brings together metal detecting clubs, detector retailers and the individual detectorist into a well informed and active state metal detecting community.

A well informed metal detecting community can stand up for their right to practice the hobby vs. a fragmented community that in most cases will not even know what is taking place in their state or in adjacent communities.

An organizational model for a state association should include:

- mission statement
- officers elected by the state's club membership
- a statewide quarterly/semi update meeting
- officers educated on state laws that directly and indirectly impact the hobby
- officers to work with state representatives for obtaining friendly metal detecting laws
- a well maintained email list and website with details on state, local laws and detecting programs
- an outreach program to encourage state metal detector retailers to be part of the association
- an outreach program to encourage metal detecting clubs to develop community and saving history projects
- an outreach program and process to have retailers encourage individual detectorist to join a club or the state association if no club exist in their area
- a method to provide public press releases concerning lost item returns, community & saving history projects and other situations that provide a positive hobby image

Another important attribute of a state metal detecting association is that state legislators prefer to work with state constituents and not with a national association or people from outside the state. State legislators prefer to be working for their citizens' needs rather than be influenced by outsiders