# **OREGON OBSIDIAN SOURCES**



The prominent landform in the center of the image above is the lower plateau of the Obsidian Cliffs unit, one of Oregon's most intensively-utilized prehistoric sources of glass. The photo was taken facing west from the summit of the Middle Sister, Oregon High Cascades.

# **OBSIDIAN CLIFFS**

ALTERNATE NAMES: North Sister, Obsidian Ridge, Three Sisters.

LOCATION - COUNTY: Lane.

ACCESS AND OWNERSHIP: Three Sisters Wilderness Area; special permit required for entry to plateau area. Access limited by snow in winter months.

GEOLOGIC BACKGROUND/SETTING: Mapped as part of unit Qr (rhyodacite and dacite) by Taylor et al. 1987.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE:** Trace element studies of obsidian artifacts from archaeological sites in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia indicate that this source is one of the most significant ones in Oregon.

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An excerpt from Taylor et al. (1987) and their geologic map of the Three Sisters Wilderness. The middle plateau of the source area (crossed by the Pacific Crest Trail) is centered approximately at the Qr label and extends south to Obsidian Falls. The upper plateau is located to the immediate southeast of Sisters Spring.

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For a YouTube tour of Obsidian Cliffs, see: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=keqwPwezpmE">www.youtube.com/watch?v=keqwPwezpmE</a>



The Obsidian Cliffs source vicinity. From the North Sister U. S. Geological Survey quadrangle map (1988; scale 1:24,000).



Obsidian Falls is pictured on the cover of this 1916 publication.