

HAYSTACK DISTRICT

LOCATION

The Haystack district is on the northern and eastern slopes of the Antelope Range and includes prospects in the Alpha Mountains to the east. Small prospects and mines along quartz veins in metasediments and granodiorites extend from Long Canyon north east to Box Canyon along the western margin of the district. Long Canyon is also the site of a large placer operation. The Imlay-Jungo road bisects the district and provides the only access. The road passes less than a mile east of the biggest producer in the district, the Haystack Mine.

HISTORY

The district got its name from Haystack Butte a conical or haystack shaped knob of granodiorite that crops out in the valley halfway between the Alpha and Antelope Mountains. The butte forms a very distinct landmark that is visible for many miles in all directions. As a result, it was commonly referred to by the early diarist who traveled the Antelope Trail.

Gold-silver mines in the district have been worked intermittently since 1914 with periods of peak production occurring in the 1930's. By 1915 the gold ore was being treated in a five stamp mill that was erected on a good source of water a few miles east of the Haystack Mine. By 1939 the total production from the mine was reported to be 1,320 tons of ore valued at \$46,000.

Activity in the district at the time of the study was limited to the placer workings in Long Valley.

GEOLOGICAL SETTING

The exposed rocks in the district consist of Triassic and Jurassic metasediments intruded by granodiorite and cut by quartz veins. The north-south trending mountains are cut by two major east-west drainages; Long Canyon and Box Canyon. The canyons are narrow and up to 1500 feet deep. White quartz vein material is a common sight, cropping out along the canyons or being scattered along the slopes of the darker metasediments. The veins are usually iron stained and often brecciated.

ORE DEPOSITS

In both Long Canyon and Box Canyon quartz veins have been explored by shallow shafts, inclines and prospects. The old workings were covered by location notices that dated from the 1930's.

Several square miles of placer workings at the head of Long Canyon have been superimposed on older workings along quartz vein systems in granodiorite. The placer operators have built a 5 to 6 mile pipe-line up Long Canyon to transport water from the valley to the east to the mine.

The prospects in the Alpha Mountains to the east are along mineralized quartz veins hosted in granodiorite.

Mineralization in the district appears to be restricted to gold-bearing quartz veins and veinlets which are also the most likely source for the placers. The ores at the Haystack Mine are reported by Johnson (1977) to be free-gold in pods along veinlets. Development at the mine includes shallow trenches, shafts and prospects that follow the northeast trending vein system. The workings extend for several hundred feet along the surface of a granodiorite host that is only slightly altered. The ore grade mineralization is limited to an area of less than a quarter mile square and was reported to be shallow in depth.

GEOCHEMICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Samples from the main vein system at the Haystack Mine ran 21.0 ppm gold with anomalous amounts of bismuth and minor base metals. The prospects in the Alpha Mountains consisted of east-trending parallel veins that had visible arsenopyrite up to 2" thick. Assays from the veins ran as high as 6.0 ppm gold with high values for arsenic. Of the six vein systems assayed in the district all had detectable gold that ranged in value from .05 to 21.0 ppm with minor silver and base metals.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- Johnson, M. G. (1977) Geology and Mineral Deposits of Pershing County, Nevada: NBMG Bull. 89.
- Vanderburg, W. O. (1936) Reconnaissance of Mining Districts in Pershing County, Nevada: USBM IC 6902.