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Item 6

IRON POINT DISTRICT

LOCATION

The Iron Point mining district and nearby railroad siding are named for Iron Point, a low ridge with a reddish coloration at the northeast end of Edna Mountain, about 15 km east of the town of Golconda. Although the red rocks were suspected to "indicate the proximity of iron" (see Carlson, 1974), the ridge is made up of Tertiary basalt flows (Erickson and Marsh, 1974). In this report the district is somewhat arbitrarily restricted to properties in the Golconda, 7 1/2-minute quadrangle. Mines and prospects in the Golconda Summit area southwest of Iron Point are included in the Golconda district.

HISTORY

There is no record of any production in the district until 1918, although some claims were located considerably earlier (Vanderburg, 1938). The Silver Coin Mine is reported to have produced 30,854 oz of silver from 693.5 short tons of ore. The ore also contained a little lead and about 0.02 oz gold per ton (Vanderburg, 1938). A well-constructed heap-leach facility has been built in the last few years at the Silver Coin Mine. Additionally, exploration drilling for precious metals has been conducted in areas of hydrothermal alteration in an area of several square kilometers around the Silver Coin Mine. Rotary drilling has also been recently conducted for precious metals elsewhere in the district by the Southern Pacific Company.

GEOLOGIC SETTING

The rocks in the Iron Point district consist predominantly of Cambrian, Ordovician, Pennsylvanian, and Permian sedimentary rocks which are intruded by dikes and a small plug of Cretaceous granitic rocks and overlain by late Tertiary gravel and basalt. Much of the silver mineralization is confined to chert, quartzite, and dolomite of Cambrian and Ordovician age. The rocks are cut by thrust faults as well as north-trending high angle faults.

ORE DEPOSITS

Most of the workings in the district are for silver; Vanderburg (1938) reports that the ore minerals at the Silver Coin Mine are ceragyrite, argentite, and tetrahedrite, aociated with cerussite and oxidized copper minerals. A small amount of galena and pyrite were noted in one pile on a dump, suggesting that these minerals may be present underground. The silver mineralization is associated with quartz veins, stockworks, and extensive silicified zone in the Ordovician Valmy Formation (see Erickson and Marsh, 1974). Veins are found along both high- and low-angle structures. Recent drilling in the district has encountered a considerable footage of mineralized rock with values of 0.05-0.1 oz

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silver per ton and a trace gold. However, no higher grade zones are known to have been found.

An outcrop of metal-rich black shale is located in S12,T35N,R41E about 1.5 km north of U.S. I-80 on the east side of Golconda Summit. The shale is within the Comus Formation (Ordovician), and is rich in vanadium and zinc, but also contains unusual concentrations of copper, silver, nickel, and barium. The highest concentrations of metal occur in a stratigraphic zone about 10 m thick and traceable for over 300 m (Fischer, 1965, p. 166). The deposit hads been explored in the past for the contained metals, but the grade is reportedly too low and metallurgical problems probably too complex.

A manganese prospect is reported from S15,T35N,R41E. Manganese oxides are reported to replace chert along a N75°W fracture zone (Southern Pacific Co., p. 97). Erickson and Marsh (1974) report that a mapped green anad red chert unit in the Ordovician Valmy Formation locally contains manganese prospects near its base. Erickson and Marsh (1974) also report that the contact of a Valmy Formation greenstone unit with chert and shale is favorable ground for copper mineralization.

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