

M.G. Johnson 1972

USGS Bull 1356

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Item 43

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21. Placer: Van Duzer district

Location: On the southwest side of the Owyhee River, south of Mountain City at the eastern edge of the Bull Run Mountains.

T. 44-45 N., R. 53-54 E.

Topographic maps: Mountain City 15-minute quadrangle; Owyhee

15-minute quadrangle; Wild Horse 15-minute quadrangle.

Geologic maps: Granger, A. E., Bell, M. N., Simmons, G. E., and

Lee, Florence, 1957, *Reconnaissance geologic maps* of Elko

County, Nevada; ~~Nevada Bur. Mines Bull. 54, (plate 1), scale 1:125,000~~

Coats, R. G., 1968, Preliminary geologic maps of the Owyhee quadrangle, Nevada: ~~U.S. Geol. Survey open-file map,~~

scale 1:31,680.

Access: From Elko, 81 miles north on State Highway ~~11~~ and 43

to Van Duzer Creek (6 miles south of Mountain City);

placers are located along the creek southwest of the Owyhee River.

Extent: Van Duzer Creek drains the low hills west of the Owyhee

River for a distance of about 8 to 9 miles. Most placer

mining activity was concentrated in the upper reaches of the

creek in the region where the creek channel is narrow (secs.

32-34, T. 45 N., R. 53 E., Owyhee quadrangle). The gravel is

usually less than 15 feet deep and consists of fine gravel

with subangular and rounded pebbles. The gold varies in

size from fine dust to nuggets of 5 or 6 ounces.

history
Production: The Van Duzer placers were discovered in 1893 by Rutley M. Woodward who worked the gravels by sluicing and hydraulic methods; Woodward reported recovered \$50,000 in placer gold in the first years following discovery. The placers have been worked sporadically in this century, usually with good returns in the years worked.

In 1941, the Morrison-Knudsen Company dredged the placer area from a point $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the junction with Cobb Creek (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 32, T. 45 N., R. 53 E.) downstream about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to farmland (SE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 34, T. 45 N., R. 53 E.). The gold recovered from this operation was 2,128 ounces.

Subsequent operations by different companies occurred in 1948 and 1949 on Van Duzer Creek and Cobb Creek; the average value of the gold recovered from these operations was 33¢ per cubic yard in 1948 and 70¢ per cubic yard in 1949. Most of the production credited to the "Mountain City or Core" district by the U.S. Bureau of Mines was recovered from the Van Duzer Creek placers.

Source: The source of the placer gold in Van Duzer Creek is not well known. Small gold veins distributed throughout the Ordovician Valmy Formation ^{probably are} ~~reportedly were~~ the source of the placer gold.

Literature:

Decker, 1962: States that gold placer deposits in Trail Creek and Van Duzer Creek (north of the Bull Run quadrangle) appear spatially related to an exposed thrust surface.

Emmons, 1910: Location; extent of placer; width and depth of placer channel; size of placer gold; source.

Lincoln, 1923: Location; history; geology.

Smith, 1932: History; early production; placer mining operations in 1932.

Vanderburg, 1936^a: Early production; size and fineness of placer gold; source; placer mining in 1932.

U.S. Bureau of Mines, 1941: Dredge operation on Van Duzer Creek described.

____ 1948: Placer operation on Van Duzer Creek; cubic yards mined; amount of gold recovered.

____ 1949: Placer operation at Estella Claim; cubic yards mined; amount of gold recovered.