

NEVADA  
HUMBOLDT COUNTY

OPALITE DISTRICT  
MC DERMITT DISTRICT

The district is in the vicinity of the town of McDermitt, , 77 miles north of Winnemucca. Cinnabar was discovered in a range of low hills 13 miles by road, southwest of town in 1931 by Alcorto and Agnarez of McDermitt. The CORDERO group was first leased to the Bradley interests of San Francisco who dropped the lease in 1933.

According to this 1937 description by Vanderburg: The CORDERO GROUP consists of five unpatented claims. Development at the time consisted of an inclined 75 foot shaft and lateral workings totaling 1000 feet. In 1933 after the Bradleys dropped it, the owners from 68 tons of sorted ore, retorted at the OPALITE quicksilver mine in Oregon, 23 miles west of McDermitt, produced 42 flasks of quick.

Cinnabar occurs disseminated in an opalite formation, considerably broken by faulting.

As taken from Bull 41, Nev. Bur. Mines, 1944:

CORDERO MINE, after Bradley's dropped it remained idle to 1940; Occurs in sections 27, 28, 33, and 34, T47N, R37E; In 1940 was leased by the CORDERO MINING COMPANY, a subsidiary of SUN OIL COMPANY. 4569 flasks were produced to end of 1943.

In 1944 mine workings consisted of six open pits and some 3000 feet of underground workings. Most of ore bodies first found by surface drilling, then further explored by underground workings, and finally mined by open pit methods. Deep drilling has revealed ore to depths of 600 feet.

Rocks of the district are volcanic and altered; only outcrops in area are knobs of OPALITE formed from the more acid of the volcanic rocks lying near the top of the volcanic sequence. The OPALITE which is predominantly quartz and chalcedony, is most abundant along and above the ore-bearing zones and dies out laterally and in depth. Locally it contains enough cinnabar to be mineable ore.

Two significant structural features are exposed in the pits and underground workings. One is a well defined system of NORTH EASTERLY trending steep faults and could have been served as THROUGH GOING CHANNEL WAYS FOR THE MINERALIZING SOLUTIONS. The second structure, a combination of favorable beds and minor faults has likewise guided the rising solutions, for it is characterized by abundant iron oxides, other alteration products and spherulitic textures.