NBMG OFR 83-11
See also 83-12
for geochemical results

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Item 7

PALMETTO DISTRICT

3480006

The Palmetto district is located in and around the Palmetto Mountains, a southeast trending spur of the Silver Peak Range lying generally south of Clayton Valley and north of Palmetto Wash.

The first recorded activity in the district was in 1866, a stamp mill was constructed that year to work prospects in the vicinity of what later was known as the Palmetto mine. The Palmetto and adjacent mines are very large, with extensive dumps, and obviously were major operations in their day. Production records from the district are very scant, but Lincoln credits the district with $6,500,000 in silver from the Palmetto mine itself. The McNamara mine was discovered in 1880 (Lincoln, 1923), and is credited with a considerable production of lead-silver ore. There is little exploration activity in the district, and only one mine, the Buster, was reported to be active in 1982 (Directory of Nevada mine operations, 1982).

Deposits in the Palmetto district are largely of silver, gold, and lead and occur in veins in the Palmetto pluton or in flanking lower Paleozoic strata. Most of the veins trend northwest or west, generally parallel to the long direction of the Palmetto pluton (Albers and Stewart, 1982). The mines of the district are clustered about four general centers, two along the northeast margin of Palmetto Mountain, and two along the southwest margin of the mountain. The major area, that around the Palmetto mine, contains at least two parallel, northwest-trending vein systems that can be traced along strike for at least a third of a mile (Quade, 1982). Samples of vein material collected from the Palmetto dump contain galena, in white quartz, some of the sulfide material present appears to be antimony-bearing, and cerussite fills small fractures and lines vugs in the vein. Nearby, on what is suspected of being the same vein system, chalcopyrite occurs in a white quartz vein that contains fragments of black shale and silicified limestone.

Quade, 1982, mentions that skarn minerals are present on the dump of the Silver Champion mine, near the Palmetto, and he also mentions observing scheelite at the Buster mine which is about two miles southeast of the Palmetto. No scheelite has been before reported from this area.

Further to the southeast, and still on the southeast margin of Palmetto Mountain, manganese-copper mineralization with associated barite, is found in veins in silicated rocks of the Campito and Deer Springs Formations.

Along the northeast margin of the district, the 4-mile-long Paymaster zone (Spurr, 1906) extends from the area near Birch Creek Spring to the base of Palmetto Mountain. This area apparently never developed into any major mine. The McNamara mine is to the east, at McNamara Spring along what Spurr, 1906, shows to be a parallel vein system.

The Palmetto district, following its early silver producing period, has not been really active. The vein systems described by Spurr in 1906 and by Quade in 1982 are large and well developed. The presence of skarn minerals indicates that there may be potential for discovery of tungsten ores in the district.

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